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NATURE STUDY

IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

SECOND READER

REVISED AND ENLARGED EDITION

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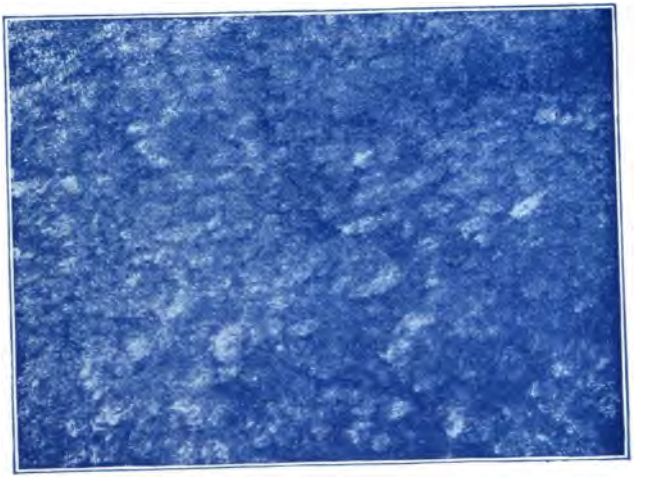
Mares' tails

and
Mackerel scales



Make lofty ships carry low sails

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NATURE STUDY

IN

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

SECOND READER

Myths, Stories, Poems

BY

L. L. W. WILSON, PH.D.

AUTHOR OF "NATURE STUDY IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS, A MANUAL FOR TEACHERS," ETC.

HEAD OF THE BIOLOGICAL LABORATORIES IN THE PHILADELPHIA NORMAL SCHOOL FOR GIRLS, AND IN CHARGE OF THE NATURE WORK IN THE SCHOOL OF OBSERVATION AND PRACTICE CONNECTED WITH THE NORMAL SCHOOL

REVISED AND ENLARGED EDITION

New York

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

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PREFACE

THE original matter in this series of Readers has been written, and the selections chosen, with the desire of putting into the hands of little children literature which shall have for their minds the same interest and value that really good books and magazines have for grown-up people. It is the author's aim to prepare the ground and even thus early to plant the seeds of that which may later develop into a love for art, for literature, and for nature.

But this most desirable result cannot be accomplished by merely putting the Readers into the hands of the child, expecting him to master the words by reading the sentences, — to get at the thought while he stumbles and hesitates over unfamiliar words.

It is expected that each of these lessons will be preceded by a nature lesson.

For a guide in this work, both for facts and method, I know of nothing better than my own book, "Nature Study: A Manual for Teachers." These Readers have been planned in accordance with the course of study there outlined.

Either during the nature lesson or after it, the new words should be thoroughly taught from the

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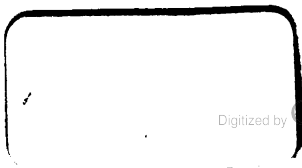

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AUTUMN STORIES AND POEMS

AUTUMN

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SEPTEMBER

When the bluebells are chiming their fairy tones in the breeze on every bank, you know that autumn is coming on; and when the apples have rosy cheeks in the orchard, and the golden corn is waving in the fields, you know that it is September.

—*From* Hugh Macmillan's "*The Clock of Nature.*"

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THE WINDS AND CLOUDS

MERCURY

HERE is Mercury. He is carrying a message for his father, Jupiter.

He was up at the break of day, for he had a long way to go.

Around his ankles he fastened his winged sandals.

He put on his head his low-crowned hat with its two bright wings.

Then he looked for his staff.

Here it is! It is made of gold.

There are two snakes twined about it. But they will not harm Mercury!

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At the top of the staff is another pair of wings.

Now he is ready to start on his errand.

Quickly he speeds along. He flies faster than you can go on your bicycle. Yes; I saw you, the other day, flying down the hill like a bird.

But Mercury can fly up hill, too.

He leaps from mountain to mountain.

He flies over the sea, his winged feet just touching the waves.

APOLLO'S COWS

I HAVE already told you that Mercury was the son of Jupiter. But I did not tell you that his mother was Maia. She was a goddess so beautiful that flowers sprang up wherever she stepped.

She still walks through the meadows and calls up the flowers from their winter sleep.

She makes the earth beautiful with violets and buttercups.

She touches the apple-trees, and the sweet-smelling blossoms come.

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It is the lovely month of May when Maia takes her walk.

Mercury was a very wise baby, — more wonderful even than your little baby brother.

For when he was only a few hours old, he understood everything that was said to him.

On the very first day he climbed out of his cradle, and ran down to the seashore.

There he found a tortoise shell. He made holes in it, and strung across it some bits of seaweed.

What do you think he was making?

What would you do if you had it in your hand?

Just what Mercury did, I am sure.

He put it to his lips and blew upon it.

It made such wonderful music that the flowers and trees danced to it. The birds stopped singing to listen.

After awhile he was tired. He lay on his back on the shore, looking around to find some new mischief.

As he lay there, he saw a great blue meadow, with white cows feeding in it.

They belonged to his brother, Apollo.

Quick as a thought he ran after them. He

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chased them into a cave, where he fastened them in.

Apollo was very angry when he found out what Mercury had done, and complained to his father, Jupiter.

But he was such a little baby that Apollo felt ashamed.

Then Mercury picked up his shell. He breathed upon it and made music with it.

Apollo listened and soon forgot his anger. He thought only of the beautiful music.

Then the big brother and the little brother made friends.

Mercury gave Apollo his lyre.

Apollo gave Mercury charge over his cows. You can often see him driving them over the blue meadow of the sky.

RAIN SHOWER

PLUMP little baby clouds,
  Dimpled and soft,
Rock in their air cradles,
  Swinging aloft.

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Snowy cloud mothers
With broad bosoms white,
Watch o'er the baby clouds
Slumbering light.

Tired little baby clouds
Dreaming of fears,
Turn in their air cradles,
Dropping soft tears.

Great snowy mother clouds
Brooding o'er all.
Let their warm mother tears
Tenderly fall.

ZEPHYR AND HIS BROTHERS

ZEPHYR is the west wind.

Although he is full of mischief, he is kind and gentle.

He is not always playing, for he has work to do.

He lives in a large dark cave with his father Æolus and his brothers, North Wind, South Wind, and East Wind.

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It is a very busy family, for Æolus will not let any of his children be idle.

South Wind has to make the oranges and bananas grow.

East Wind has to bring the rain and water Mother Earth's gardens.

West Wind plants the seeds of the dandelions and the daisies. He covers them up with leaves so that they will be warm and will take root by and by.

He flies kites and sails boats and turns wind-mills.

I have not said anything about North Wind.

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Maybe you will like him best of all.

He is the friend of Jack Frost. He brings you snow and ice. Then you can skate and ride on your sled.

But sometimes Boreas — for that is the name of the North Wind — is very cruel.

He piles the snow so high that poor people are buried in it.

When he is angry, he tears up houses and trees, and everything that stands in his way.

He rolls up the waves of the ocean until they are higher than your house.

Then the ship goes down, and the poor sailors are drowned.

WIND SONG

I saw you toss the kites on high,
And blow the birds about the sky,
And all around I heard you pass
Like ladies' skirts across the grass;
O wind a blowing all night long!
O wind that blows so loud a song!

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I saw the different things you did,
But always felt yourself you hid;
I felt you push, I felt you call,
And could not see yourself at all;
O wind a blowing all night long!
O wind that blows so loud a song!

O you that are so strong and cold,
O blower, are you young or old?
Are you a beast of field and tree
Or just a big strong child like me?
O wind a blowing all night long!
O wind that blows so loud a song!

—Robert Louis Stevenson.

THE BAG OF WINDS

Let me tell you a story about Æolus who tied up some of his children in a bag.

There was once a great soldier named Ulysses.

We had a great soldier in our country named Ulysses. Have you ever heard of him?

But this one I am going to tell you about lived in Greece.

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He had fought in a long war and was going home in his ship. But he stopped at the cave of Æolus to make him a visit.

Æolus was very glad to see this great man.

When he was going away, Æolus put in the ship a great many presents.

One of these was a big bag filled with something and tied at the top with a silver string.

It looked just like your stocking when Kriss Kringle fills it on Christmas Eve. Only, of course, it was very large.

Æolus tied it to the mast of the ship with his own hands.

He then whispered in Ulysses' ear and told him what was in it.

"But do not let the sailors know," he said, "for that will spoil all."

Ulysses said "Good-by" and set sail.

East Wind was sent by Æolus to help Ulysses on his way, for his home was in the west.

The sea was smooth and East Wind was doing his work so well that Ulysses was near home.

But the sailors wanted to see what was in the bag. You know that you want to see what is in your stocking on Christmas morning.

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So, early one morning, while Ulysses was asleep, what do you think they did?

They untied the string to look in the bag, and all at once there was a loud —

Whizz! —

And North Wind rushed out!

He fought with East Wind.

He beat the waves until they grew white with foam.

He piled them on top of one another.

The ship was driven out of his course.

Ulysses heard the roar and whistle of the winds.

He ran out on deck.

He saw what his sailors had done!

But he was very strong, and very wise.

He went to the helm, which steers the boat just as you steer your sled when you are going down hill.

He brought the ship after many days to land.

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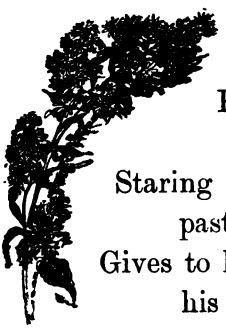
PLANTS

LITTLE PURPLE ASTER



Little Purple Aster, sitting on her stem,
Peeping at the passers-by, beckoning at them,
Staring o'er at Golden Rod, by the pasture bars,
Gives to him a timid nod when he turns his stars.

Little Purple Aster waits till very late,
Till the flowers have faded from the garden gate;
Then when all is dreary, see her buds unfurled,
Come to cheer a changeful and a sombre autumn world.

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CLYTIE

CLYTIE was a pretty fairy who liked to be all day in the woods.

She was always up and dressed before daybreak.

Then she climbed to the top of a hill. She loved to watch the sun coming up in the east.

How pretty it was to see the pink color come into the sky!

Then in a little while the shining edge of the sun would appear.

Clytie watched it growing larger and larger. At last the great ball filled the world with light.

After this she would run down the hill to a cool stream.

Every day she sat on its bank. She put her little white feet in the cool water. Her pretty green dress was tucked up so that it would not get wet.

She turned her sweet face up to the sun. And Zephyr played with the curls of her yellow hair.

"I love the sun." she said. "He is so bright and beautiful."

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Sometimes clouds came and covered the face of the sun. Then Clytie was sad.

But after the shower the sun would smile down on her again. And she would laugh with glee.

As she sat among the hollyhocks and lilies she looked like a pretty flower herself, with her green dress and yellow hair.

Apollo thought so, too, as he looked down lovingly on her.

But the time came for the sun to go down in the west. Then Clytie would climb up the hill again and watch him sink below the horizon.

"Good-night, dear Sun; I shall watch for you to-morrow."

Apollo thought that he had never seen anything so beautiful as Clytie.

"What a pity that she should die, like other people!" he thought. "How I should miss her pretty face every morning!"

Then he began to think what he should do to keep Clytie always young and pretty and loving.

"I know now," he said. And he looked warmly down on Clytie's yellow head as she sat among the flowers by the edge of the water.

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"She shall be a beautiful yellow flower!"

It was no sooner said than done. For Apollo was a great and powerful god.

Her little feet took root in the soft warm earth.

Her green frock grew into shining leaves.

Her pretty white face and yellow hair became a lovely flower which nodded and smiled up at the sun!

The next time you go into your grandmother's garden, run up to the sunflower that stands near the fence. Whisper to it, "Clytie," and see what happens.

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TO AN INSECT

I LOVE to hear thine earnest voice,
Wherever thou art hid,
Thou testy little dogmatist,
Thou pretty Katydid!
Thou mindest me of gentlefolks,—
Old gentlefolks are they,—
Thou say'st an undisputed thing
In such a solemn way.

Peace to the ever murmuring race!
And when the latest one
Shall fold in death her feeble wings
Beneath the autumn sun,
Then shall she raise her fainting voice
And lift her drooping lid,
And then the child of future years
Shall hear what Katy did.

—OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.

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THE DRAGON-FLY

THE gorgeous winged dragon-fly manages to make the most of his whole life. Part of the time he crawls in the water below. The rest of the time he is flying in the air above. But whether in water or on land he is a greedy and bloodthirsty insect.

When he is a water grub, he moves very slowly. But the quickest of insects cannot escape from him, for he has a peculiar under-lip. It is very long and has two sharp hooks at its broad end. This lip folds back by a kind of hinge. It is called a mask, because it covers the lower part of his face.

He looks innocent and harmless enough. But the moment an insect comes by, the lip is shot out. The pincers grasp the prey, and throw it into the mouth. Then the mask closes again.

As he glides along the bottom, the greedy creature seizes all that comes his way. He attacks grubs, worms, water slugs, and even small fish.

Sometimes, however, he is eaten in turn by other animals. Yet he often escapes. For he

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breathes by taking in water at his tail. When he wishes to get out of the way, he pushes himself along by forcing the water out.

In a year he grows big and strong. Short wings begin to appear under his skin. Then he crawls listlessly to the top of a plant. There he drags himself out of his coverings. Gradually he expands his large gauzy wings. He shakes free his sharp-clawed feet, and is at once ready for new victims.

His large, gleaming, jewel-like eyes espy a mosquito. In an instant he is after it.

He flys upwards, downwards, and sideways without turning. His long body serves as a rudder.

When he has caught his prey, he devours it quickly.

Well does he deserve his other name of mosquito hawk!

— *Adapted from* ARABELLA BUCKLEY'S "*Life and Her Children.*"

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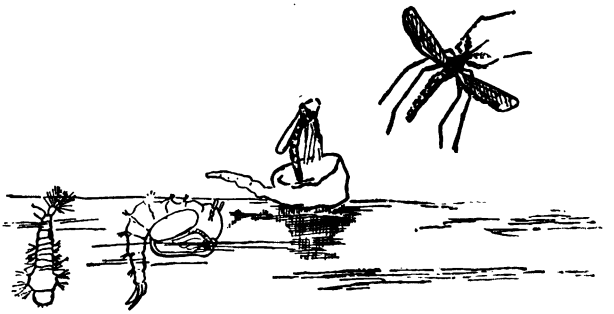
THE MOSQUITO



When the mother mosquito is ready to lay her eggs, she flies to the nearest quiet water. She collects together all her eggs and glues them together. She uses her hind legs for this important work.

These eggs look like a fairy boat floating on the water. But in a very short time lively little wigglers hatch out.

The tufts of hair which you see about the mouth, they kept in motion. This means that animals still smaller than themselves are whirled down into their throats.

Did you never see these wigglers in a barrel of rain water?

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Put some of the water into a tumbler. See, the wigglers are swimming head downwards.

And why is this, do you think? It is because they breathe with the tail. They keep it above so that they can easily thrust it into the air.

At the end of a couple of weeks, the wiggler creeps out of its skin. This it does for three more times, one after the other. The last time it is shorter. It can still swim, but it no longer eats.

At last the time comes for the birth of the mosquito. The skin begins to split. Out comes the head. The body is drawn gradually out of the case. This is the dangerous moment. If the mosquito can only get its legs out it is safe. But sometimes the skin boat tips over and the mosquito is drowned.

When it is at last free it rests its slender legs for a moment on the water, and then flies away.

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OCTOBER

"In rough October
Earth must disrobe her."

—Christina G. Rossetti.

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THE SUN

APOLLO'S MOTHER

Do you remember that Mercury's big brother was called Apollo?

Jupiter was the father of both of them, but Apollo's mother was called Latona.

She was not so pretty and merry as golden-haired Maia, the mother of Mercury.

But she was tall and beautiful, with eyes and hair as black as night.

She was very unhappy. Juno was jealous of her, and drove her away from home.

The poor lady had to go on and on without resting for a single moment. For Juno made all things, both great and small, promise not to help her.

One day, tired and thirsty, she saw, not far away, a pond of clear water.

She ran towards it, and she knelt on the bank.

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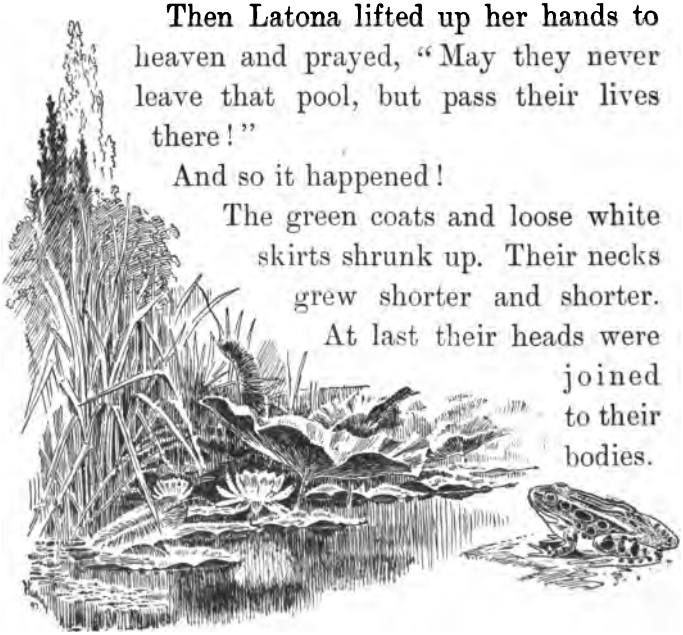
She put her mouth down to take a drink of the cool water.

But some country people who were working on the shore would not let her drink.

"Why are you so cruel? Is not water free to all? Have pity on me! I am thirsty, and I only ask a drink of this cool water!"

But they waded into the pool, and stirred up the mud with their feet. Then the water was not fit to drink.



Then Latona lifted up her hands to heaven and prayed, "May they never leave that pool, but pass their lives there!"

And so it happened!

The green coats and loose white skirts shrunk up. Their necks grew shorter and shorter. At last their heads were joined to their bodies.

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Their voices grew harsh, and their cruel mouths, which had refused a drink of water to poor Latona, were stretched from ear to ear.

And ever since they have lived as frogs in the slimy pool.

Sometimes they jump out for a little while on the bank, and then you can see their green backs and white bellies.

But pretty soon they have to jump into the water again.

BIRTH OF APOLLO

At last, one day, Latona came to the sea.

As she ran along the beach, tired and footsore, she cried out: —

"O Father Neptune, help me!"

Neptune, the god of the sea, felt sorry for her.

He sent out of the water a huge fish, called a dolphin.

The dolphin took Latona upon its back. He carried her over the waves to a little island named Delos.

This island was not much bigger than a boat.

To keep it from rocking, Neptune fastened it with chains to the bottom of the sea.

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By and by two babies were born. The boy was called Apollo, and his twin sister was named Diana.

The two children grew very fast.

Apollo was soon a tall and handsome young man.

His face was as bright as the sun.

His father, Jupiter, was proud of him. He gave him a golden chariot and a pair of swans. These would carry him over land and sea, wherever he wanted to go.

He also gave him a silver bow, with sharp, bright arrows.

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Apollo was such a good shot that his arrows never missed their mark.

Let me tell you how he shot the great serpent, Python, with one of these shining arrows.

THE KILLING OF THE PYTHON

THE Python was a huge serpent. He lived in a cave near the foot of a mountain in Greece.

Every little while he would come out and seize sheep and oxen. And sometimes he took men, women, and little children. He dragged them into his den to eat them.

All the people lived in great terror of him.

Many had tried to kill him. But the very sight of the cruel monster had made them shake with fear.

At last Apollo heard of this. Getting into his beautiful golden car, he was carried to the spot in the twinkling of an eye.

When the people saw the bright god, they began to sing songs of joy.

Then Apollo, taking his silver bow on his shoulder, went into the mountain.

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When the Python heard him coming, he rushed out of his cave to devour him.

His jaws were open. His great scaly body glistened in the light which Apollo shed around him.

But Apollo kept his bright eyes fixed on him. Taking a step forward, he drew his bow. The arrow sped right down the throat of the serpent.

Here is a picture of Apollo just after he has pulled the bow.

His arm, which you can not see, is still stretched out. He seems to be looking after the arrow to see whether it has gone where he meant to send it.

When you throw a ball, which arm do you use? Apollo used his right arm to shoot the arrow.

The people loved Apollo so much for ridding them of this cruel beast that they begged him

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to stay with them always while he was on earth.

"Yes," said Apollo. "I shall build my house here."

So on the very spot where he killed the Python there was built a beautiful house.

The place was called by Apollo "Delphi," or "Dolphin," after the kind fish which had carried his mother on its back to Delos.

THE SUNBEAMS

"Now, what shall I send to the earth to-day?"
Said the great, round, golden Sun.
"Oh! let us go down there to work and play,"
Said the Sunbeams, every one.

So down to the Earth, in a shining crowd,
Went the merry, busy crew;
They painted with splendor each floating cloud
And the sky while passing through.

"Shine on, little Star, if you like," they cried;
"We will weave a golden screen
That soon all your twinkling and light shall hide,
Though the Moon may peep between."

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The Sunbeams then in through the windows crept,
To the children in their beds —
They poked at the eyelids of those who slept,
Gilded all the little heads.

"Wake up, little children!" they cried in glee,
"And from Dreamland come away!
We've brought you a present: wake up and see!
We have brought you a sunny day!"

— EMILIE POULSSON.

APOLLO AND HYACINTHUS

Do you know what it is to play quoits?

Once the beautiful sun-god Apollo played a game of quoits with Hyacinthus.

Listen and I will tell you what a sad thing put an end to the game.

Apollo loved Hyacinthus dearly. He loved him as if the boy had been his younger brother.

He played with him every day. He often took him with him to the mountains.

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He taught him how to fish. He showed him the streams in which the fish were plenty.

He gave him a swift horse, and two or three beautiful dogs. For he wanted Hyacinthus to go with him on the hunt.

In fact, everything that the boy wished Apollo gave him.

But listen to what happened.

One day Apollo took a long walk with Hyacinthus out in the green fields.

But the fields were no longer green. They were brown and dry from the great heat of summer.

The flowers drooped their heads for want of rain.

The wheat and corn were dying in the hot sun.

Not a leaf was stirring on the trees.

The sheep and cows had left the open fields where they had been grazing. They were standing under the trees near the water.

Apollo and Hyacinthus sat down under the shade of a large chestnut tree to get cool.

After a little while, the god took his lyre. He made the sweetest music that you ever heard.

Soon Hyacinthus became restless. Like most

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lads, he liked to play games much better than to listen to music.

"Let us play a game of quoits," said he. "This meadow is a fine open space for throwing the discus."

"It is very warm for such a game," said Apollo.

But nothing else would please Hyacinthus, and so the game began.

Hyacinthus threw the first quoit and then it was Apollo's turn.

He threw the quoit so high, that it was a long time coming down.

Hyacinthus ran to catch it.

It fell to the earth with great force. It bounded up again just as Hyacinthus was stooping for it.

It struck the poor boy on the forehead, and he fell down dead.

Apollo ran to him. He lifted his head on his knee.

He cried bitterly. His tears mingled with the blood that flowed from the wound on to the ground.

"Oh, my poor boy! My dear Hyacinthus!" he cried.

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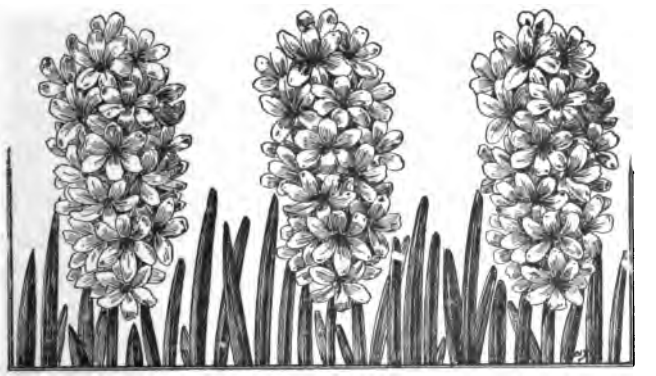
"What shall I do? I cannot bring you back to life.

"But you shall live in the form of a beautiful flower. And every one that sees you shall remember how much I loved you."

And as he spoke, there grew out of the very spot where the boy had fallen, a lovely Hyacinth.

Do you know the Hyacinth when you see it? Does it not smell sweet?



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STORY OF PHAETHON

HERE is Apollo driving the car of the sun through the sky.

How wild the horses are! How they seem to rear and plunge!

And yet how lightly he holds the reins!

They know their master. They obey the lightest touch of his hand.

But what if some one else should dare to drive them!

How they would pull on the bit, and stamp and fret!

There was once a young man who was so

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bold as to think that he could drive these fiery horses.

This was Phaethon, the son of Apollo.

He lived on the earth with his mother. He saw his father only from a great distance.

He was very proud of having so mighty a father.

But his companions jeered at him.

"We do not believe that it is true," they said. "He never comes to see you."

But his mother said: "Wait, my son, until you are tall and strong. Then you may go to find your father in the palace of sunrise."

Day after day passed, and Phaethon grew impatient.

At last, one day, his mother said, "Go, my son; now is the time."

All that day, and all the night, he travelled to the east. Before daybreak he came to the palace of Apollo.

The great king was sitting on a throne of gold and diamonds.

He wore on his head a crown of sunbeams.

On his right hand stood the Days, the Months, the Years.

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On his left hand stood the Seasons.

There was Spring, with a wreath of flowers on her head. Summer had her arms full of grain. Autumn carried a basket of fruit. Winter's curls were glistening icicles.

Phaethon was so dazzled by the bright light, that he had to shade his eyes with his hand.

Apollo saw the young man, and knew him to be his son.

He laid aside his crown of sunbeams and stepped down from his throne.

Taking Phaethon in his arms, he called him his son, and kissed him.

"Oh, my father!" cried Phaethon, "if I am indeed your son, give me something to show that I belong to you."

"Ask what you will, my child, and I shall grant it."

Phaethon did not have to think twice about what he wanted. He had long ago made up his mind what, in all the world, he would most like to do.

"Let me drive the sun-car through the sky, just for one day, Father," said he.

Apollo was very sorry when he heard this.

"Listen, my son," said he, "no one but my-

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self can do that, not even Jupiter, the king of all the gods.

"How can you, who are only mortal, hope to do it?

"The horses are wild and the road is steep.

"First it goes up and up, so that the horses can scarcely climb it.

"The middle of the way is so high that you dare not look down upon the earth, far below you.

"The last part is down such a steep hill that you are in danger of falling headlong."

He told him, too, of the monsters of the sky; the Great Bear, the Scorpion, the Lion.

But Phaethon would not be satisfied with anything else. And, as Apollo had promised, it had to be so.

By this time the Dawn had opened the doors of the East.

The horses were led from the stable and harnessed to the sun-car.

This was made of gold and diamonds.

The wheels were of gold, with spokes of silver.

The horses breathed fire from their great nostrils.

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When all was ready, Apollo placed the crown of sunbeams on the head of Phaethon.

He put in his hand the reins and the whip. He gave him this advice: —

"Do not go too high, or you will set heaven on fire. Do not go too low or you will burn the earth.

"Keep to the middle path; you will see the deep ruts that the car has made."

But Phaethon was in a hurry to be off.

With a light touch of the whip and a gay shout, he started.

But the horses soon missed the strong hand of their master.

They plunged and reared.

They left the beaten track.

They went up so high in heaven that the Great Bear was scorched with heat.

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When Phaethon looked down upon the earth from that great height, he grew pale with fear, and his knees shook.

The reins fell from his hands.

The horses plunged down the steep path toward the earth.

The clouds began to smoke.

The mountain tops were set on fire.

The rivers were dried up and mountains became deserts.

The people of Africa were burnt black.

Even Neptune, who lives in the sea, cried out in terror.

All the people called upon Jupiter to save them.

Jupiter looked down from Olympus. He saw that something had to be done quickly or the world would be burnt up.

Taking a thunderbolt in his hand, he hurled it against Phaethon and killed him.

The unhappy boy fell from the car. Down, down, he went like a shooting star. At last he sank into a great river.

The horses, snorting and foaming, found their way back to their house in the East.

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TO APOLLO

God of the golden bow,
And of the golden lyre,
And of the golden hair,
And of the golden fire,
Charioteer
Round the patient year!

Who — who did dare
To tie for a moment thy plant round his bow?
O Delphic Apollo!

IRIS

You have often seen the rainbow. But I am not sure that you have ever seen Iris riding over it.

Iris is the daughter of Apollo and a beautiful nymph called Water-Drop.

She carries all the messages and runs on all the errands for Juno, the wife of Jupiter.

When she is in a very great hurry, a bridge is thrown down. It connects the dwelling of the gods and the earth.

Then Iris wraps herself in a rosy-colored cloud.

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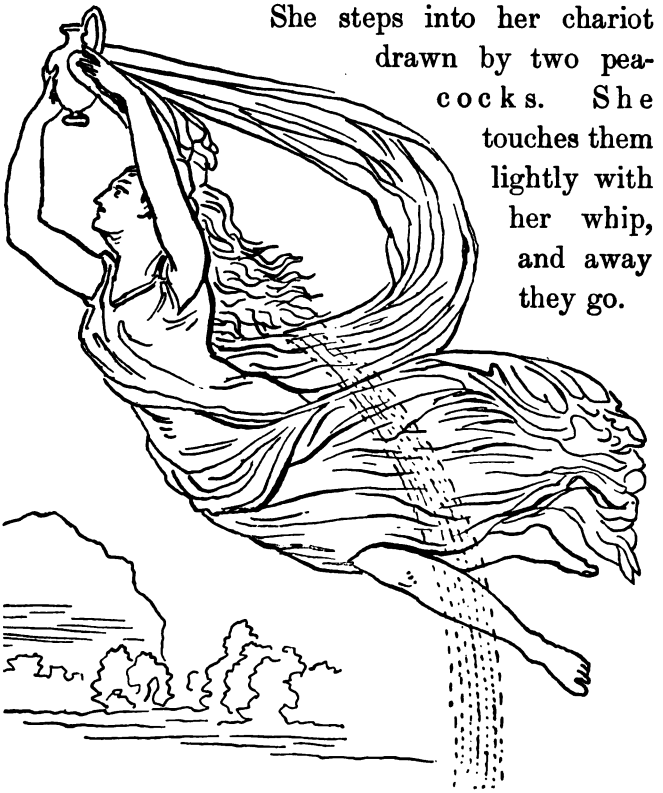
She puts on a necklace of raindrops given to her by her mother.



She steps into her chariot drawn by two peacocks. She touches them lightly with her whip, and away they go.

First, up and up, then down and down, over the beautiful colored arch.

When she returns, the bridge is drawn up. For no one may use it but Iris.

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At the end of this rainbow bridge is planted a pot of gold.

On another day I shall tell you how this pot of gold was stolen, and of the strange way in which it was found.

Ever since that time, Iris has soldiers standing near to guard it.

They wear blue cloaks. Their swords are always drawn and pointing to the sky.

I wonder if you have ever come across any of these soldiers.

They like to camp near the water.

The next time Iris throws her bridge across the sky, look very closely. Maybe you will catch a glimpse of her.

THE RAINBOW

My heart leaps up when I behold
A rainbow in the sky;
So was it when my life began;
So is it now I am a man;
So be it when I shall grow old,
Or let me die!

— WORDSWORTH.

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IF I WERE A SUNBEAM

"If I were a sunbeam
I know what I'd do:
I would seek white lilies
Rainy woodlands through.
I would steal among them,
Softest light I'd shed,
Until every lily
Raised its drooping head.

"If I were a sunbeam,
I know where I'd go:
Into lowliest hovels,
Dark with want and woe:
Till sad hearts looked upward,
I would shine and shine;
Then they'd think of heaven,
Their sweet home and mine."

Art thou not a sunbeam,
Child whose life is glad
With an inner radiance
Sunshine never had?
Oh, as God has blessed thee,
Scatter rays divine!
For there is no sunbeam
But must die or shine.

—Lucy Larcom.

THE STORY OF THE THISTLE

See this tall soldier in a kilt so short that it does not cover his knees!

What a strange dress!

Do you know to what country he belongs?

He is a Highland laddie from Scotland. His home is in a valley shut in by high hills. They are covered in the summer and the autumn with purple heather.

The soldier loves the heather, but he loves the thistle more. The thistle is a soldier, too! It saved Scotland from her foes.

This is how it happened: —

The fierce cruel men from the north came down to Scotland.

There they fought many battles.

The brave Highlanders tried hard to drive them back.

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One day, weary and worn, they lay down on the ground to take a little rest.

Each soldier wrapped his blanket about him. Soon all were sound asleep.

Something came stealing up on the other side of the hill.

Nearer and nearer it came.

It was the Northmen creeping stealthily along.

Sometimes the dry branches of the tree would snap, as the soldiers put them aside.

Or the crisp leaves would crackle noisily under their feet.

"Sh! Sh!" the leader would say.

The man in the moon saw them coming, as he peeped through the clouds.

Quickly he brushed away the clouds. He tried to waken the Scots by sending his beams right into their eyes.

But still the Scots slept on.

At last, a brave thistle said to itself: —

"I shall save Scotland even if I die for it."

Raising high his sharp, thorny head, he stood in the path of the savages.

In another moment a great naked foot came

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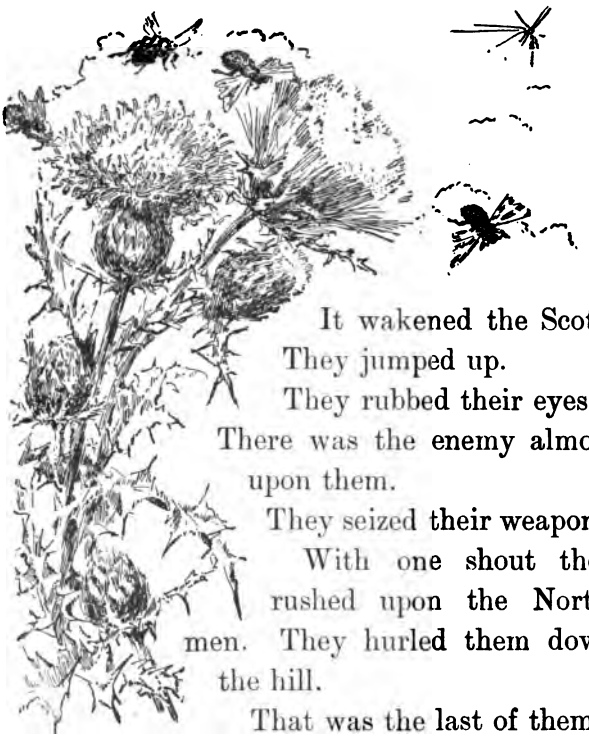
down upon the thistle. A loud cry of pain rang out in the still night.



It wakened the Scots.
They jumped up.
They rubbed their eyes.
There was the enemy almost upon them.
They seized their weapons.
With one shout they rushed upon the Northmen. They hurled them down the hill.
That was the last of them.

So the thistle saved Scotland. And so, above all else, do the Scots love the thistle.

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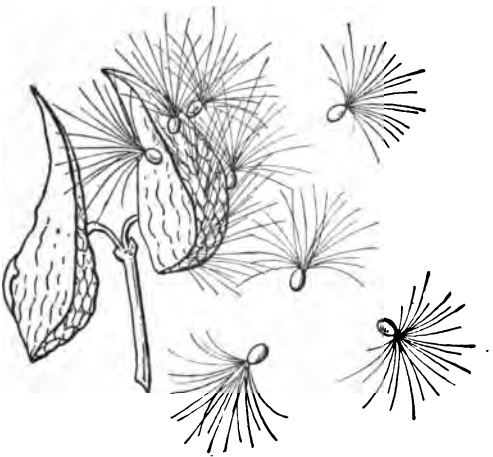
MILKWEED PODS



ALONG the dusty way they stood
Till curious fingered Autumn chanced to pass,
And, like Pandora, thought she could
Just slightly raise the cover. But, alas!
The wingèd contents were away
And nought of Autumn's skill could make them stay.

— ELIZABETH M. HOWELL.

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AURORA

A LITTLE wind comes and wakens all the birds and flowers every morning.

He rocks the branches of the trees where the birds have their nests. He says, "Wake up, little birds, and sing! Aurora is coming."

He shakes the flowers, a little rudely even, to waken them. Then they lift their heads, and send out their sweet breath on the air.

He comes through your open window and tickles your cheek with your curls. He says, "Get up, little boy; the dawn is here!"

Perhaps you are a little sleepyhead, and turn your back on the wind, going to sleep again.

But if you wake up with the birds and the flowers, you will see the coming of beautiful Aurora.

She is the goddess of the Dawn, and she lives in a golden palace near Apollo.

Every morning she pulls aside the curtains of the East with her rosy-tipped fingers, and looks out upon the world.

There she stands in her yellow gown, a torch high above her head. She wants to see if the road is clear for the sun god.

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She turns her back to tell him that all is ready. Then, flying before him, she scatters roses in his path.

AURORA'S TEARS

Did you ever take a walk in the fields after the sun has gone to sleep?

The grass is wet. Little pearly drops are on the flowers.

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It is as if somebody was quietly weeping, weeping.

All night long, too, her tears are falling. In the early morning sun they glisten like tiny diamonds.

Who is it that cries so softly, and why is she so sad?

This is the story: —

Aurora still weeps for her son, Memnon. Yet it is thousands of years since he died.

Every evening, when the darkness sets in and all things are still and quiet, she grows sad and lonely.

For she thinks of that night, so long ago, when she saw her son dead.

He was fighting a great battle. With his lance and his spear he was winning the day.

Then he met the hero Achilles, and went down before him.

Aurora, watching from Olympus, wept for her son.

His brothers, the winds, carried his body to the banks of a river.

There Aurora, with her maidens, the Hours, took leave of him. There they buried him.

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The queen of night covered the starry heavens with black clouds, in mourning for Aurora's son.

But Aurora has never gotten over her loss. Great teardrops gather in her eyes and fall one by one, as she thinks of her brave Memnon.

AURORA AND TITHONUS

THERE was once a beautiful youth named Tithonus who loved Aurora dearly.

Lying in the green grass, he watched for her every morning.

And every morning Aurora smiled down on him.

One day Tithonus was sick and dying.

He begged to be carried out into the green meadow. He wanted one last look at Aurora.

But when she saw him, she caught him up in her chariot, and carried him to Jupiter.

She begged the King of the gods to grant that Tithonus should live forever, because she loved him.

Jupiter granted this, and Aurora was happy.

But she forgot to ask Jupiter to grant that he should be forever young.

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So, after many years, the beautiful youth grew ugly and withered.

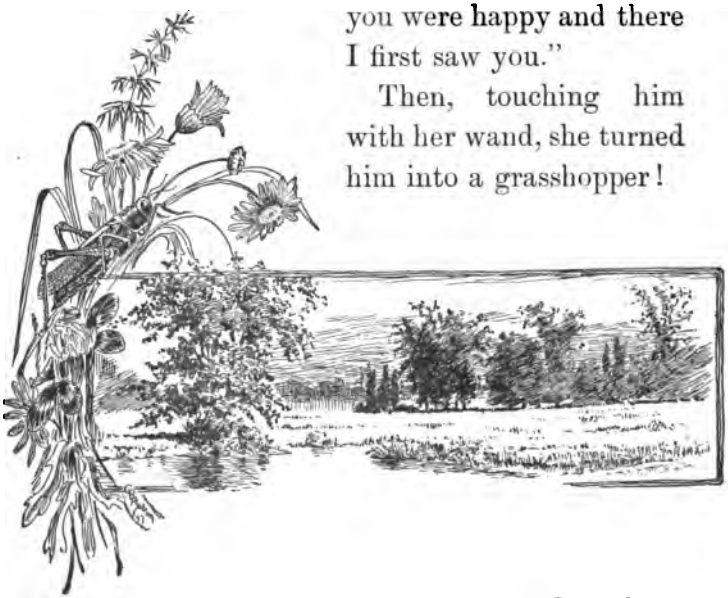
His back was stooped. His head was bald. His legs trembled. His skin was brown and wrinkled.

Aurora was still as young and beautiful as ever. The gods never grow old.

She begged Jupiter to take back his gift. But that could not be.

Aurora took pity on him, and said, "Dear Tithonus, you must live forever. But you shall live always in the green meadow. For there you were happy and there I first saw you."

Then, touching him with her wand, she turned him into a grasshopper!



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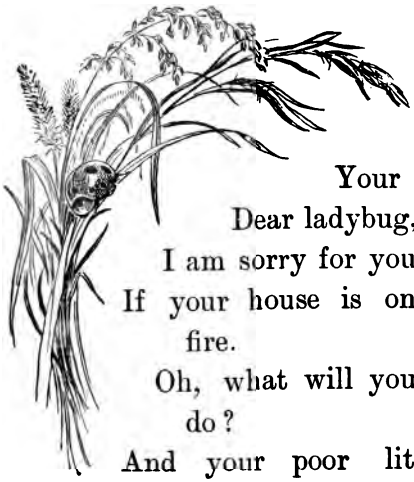
LADYBUG



LADYBUG, ladybug,
Fly away home!
Your house is on fire,
Your children will burn.

Dear ladybug,
I am sorry for you
If your house is on fire.
Oh, what will you do?
And your poor little children
All burning, dear me!
It does seem as cruel
As cruel can be.
Oh, why don't you hurry,
You slow little elf?
If I knew where you lived,
I should go there myself.
The house might burn down
While you're turning about.
'Tis because you are feeling
So badly, no doubt,

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That you hardly can stir —
No wonder, poor dear!
You must be half crazy
Such bad news to hear;
Though I've told it to dozens,
I think, besides you,
I feel just like crying
Whenever I do.
Now think of your babies!
Run, ladybug, run!
I do hope some neighbor
Has saved every one
From the terrible fire.
And ladybug, then,
You can build a new house,
And be happy again.

—CARA W. BRONSON

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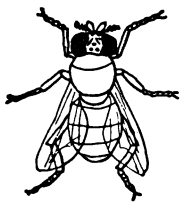
THE FLY

Does it not seem strange that our common house fly has only two wings?

Even the bees and the wasps have two pairs. And the butterflies and beetles, the dragon-flies and wasps, are all equally well provided.



Look carefully just behind the wings and the little winglets of the fly. There you will find a little knobbed stalk.

It is thought that perhaps the fly uses these to balance itself as it flies. Therefore they are called balancers.

These balancers tell us that the two-winged flies are made on the same plan as the four-winged insects, after all. For they are probably wings that have lost their size and power.

Every fly that you see was once a maggot.

Then it lived in a dust heap, or in a barnyard, or among decaying vegetables.

The big, buzzing blue bottle was hatched in meat. The mother, no matter where she herself may live, always lays her eggs in some such place.

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In a single day, usually, the footless maggot is hatched out. Then for four or five days it leads an active life.

Then it shuts itself up in its skin, now brown and hard.

At the end of another week out comes the fly.

BABY BYE

BABY bye,
Here's a fly;
Let us watch him, you and I.
How he crawls
Up the walls,
Yet never falls!

I believe, with six such legs,
You and I could walk on eggs.
There he goes,
On his toes,
Tickling baby's nose.

Spots of red
Dot his head;
Rainbows on his back are spread;

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That small speck
Is his neck;
See him nod and beck.

I can show you, if you choose,
Where to look for his shoes, —
Three small pairs,
Made of hairs;
These he always wears.

Black and brown
Is his gown;
He can wear it upside down;
It is laced
Round his waist;
I admire his taste.

Yet though tight his clothes are made,
He will lose them, I'm afraid,
If to-night
He gets sight
Of the candlelight.

In the sun
Webs are spun;
What if he gets into one?

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When it rains
He complains
On the window-panes.

Tongue to talk have you and I;
God has given the little fly
No such things;
So he sings
With his buzzing wings.

He can eat
Bread and meat;
There's his mouth
Between his feet.
On his back
Is a pack
Like a pedler's sack.

Does the baby understand?
Then the fly shall kiss her hand;
Put a crumb
On her thumb;
Maybe he will come.

Catch him? No,
Let him go,
Never hurt an insect so;

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But no doubt
He flies out
Just to gad about.

Now you see his wings of silk
Drabbled in the baby's milk;
Fie, oh fie,
Foolish fly!
How will he get dry?

All wet flies
Twist their thighs,
Thus they wipe their heads and eyes.
Cats, you know,
Wash just so,
Then their whiskers grow.

Flies have hairs too short to comb,
So they fly bareheaded home;
But the gnat
Wears a hat;
Do you believe that?

Flies can see
More than we;
See how bright their eyes must be!

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Little fly,
Ope your eye;
Spiders are near by.

For a secret I can tell, —
Spiders never use flies well.
Then away!
Do not stay.
Little fly, good-day!

— THEODORE TILTON.

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NOVEMBER

He comes,— he comes, — the Frost Spirit comes!
You may trace his footsteps now
On the naked woods and the blasted fields,
And the brown hill's withered brow.

He has smitten the leaves of the gray old trees,
Where their pleasant green came forth;
And the winds, which follow wherever he goes,
Have shaken them down to earth.

— John G. Whittier.

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NOVEMBER

DIANA

THE sun-car has passed through the gates of the west.

They are shut softly behind it, and the bright light fades away.

The lilies in the pond fold their leaves tightly.

All the little flowers go to sleep.

The birds cuddle down in their soft nests, and tuck their heads under their wings.

The last little drowsy "pee-weep" is heard, then all is quiet.

Now something comes stealing out of the darkness.

Softly, softly, it travels on. So softly that it does not waken any of the sleeping things.

It is Diana, the goddess of the moon, in her silver car.

See the crescent above her forehead, and the soft hair flowing on her shoulders!

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On her back is her quiver full of arrows.
Last evening, as she rode past your window,

she glanced in. She smiled, for there you were asleep, with your curly head where your feet should have been.

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DIANA AND ENDYMION

ONE calm clear night Diana was slowly driving her silver chariot through the sky.

She looked down upon the earth. She saw this beautiful youth Endymion just as you see him in the picture.

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He was asleep. His head had fallen forward on his breast. His arm was hanging at his side.

I think he did not mean to go to sleep, but he was very tired.

He was a shepherd. Do you see his staff, and his faithful dog?

I wonder why dogs like to bay at the moon?

Diana loved him dearly because he was so beautiful.

Every night as he slept, she slipped down from her path in the sky to watch over him.

This was soon found out in Olympus, and Jupiter said that Endymion must die.

But Diana begged for his life.

"So let it be," said Jupiter, "he shall live forever but he shall sleep forever."

And still he is young and beautiful, and still he sleeps.

But who takes care of his flocks, you may ask?

Diana, the queen of the moon.

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"LADY Moon, Lady Moon,
Sailing so high,

Drop down to Baby,

From out the great sky!"

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"Baby-kin, Baby-kin, down far below,
I hear thee calling, yet I cannot go."

But Lady Moon sendeth thee soft, shining rays.
"Moon loves the Baby," the Moonlight says.

In her house dark and blue though she must stay,
Kindly she will watch thee, till dawns the new day.

—*From* FROEBEL.

THE HOTTENTOT MOON STORY

THE little Hottentot boy lives in Africa.

He has a skin as brown as your leather school bag.

Instead of washing his face, he smears it with grease to make it shine.

His lips are thick and his nose is flat.

No comb could pass through the black, woolly curls on his head.

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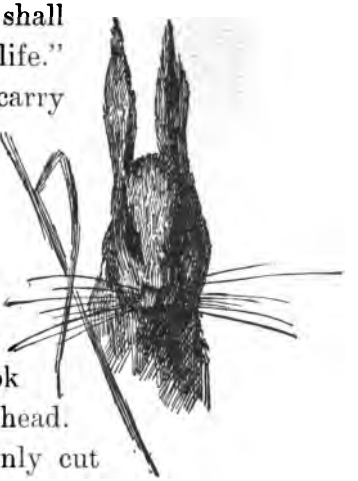
Perhaps you do not think from this account that he is very pretty.

But his mother thinks he is the sweetest thing that ever was born.

When he asks her to tell him a story, she tells him strange tales of the sun and moon and stars, and of the curious things on earth.

Here is a story that she told him about the moon: —

One day the moon said to the hare: "Go to the earth. Tell the people that, just as I rise again after dying away, so shall they die and again come to life."



But the stupid hare did not carry the kind message right.

He told the people that the moon boasted that she rose again, but that they died forever.

When the moon heard this, she was very angry. She took up an axe to cut off the hare's head.

But the axe missed and only cut his lip open. Ever since that time all the hare's children have a "hare lip."

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The hare, maddened by the pain, flew at the moon and almost scratched her eyes out.

The black scars on the moon's face are the marks of the hare's claws.

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YUM SING

Poor little Yum Sing is crying!

See how the tears are running out of the corners of his little slanting eyes!

I hope they will not spoil the color of his pretty yellow face.

But did you ever see such a funny little shaved head!

There is just one lock left on top!

It is hardly long enough to braid, but his mother has tried hard to do it.

When it has grown long it will hang down his back like a long black tail.

Let me tell you what is the matter with Yum Sing.

His mother, Mrs. Pitti Sing, is sending him to bed without his supper.

I am afraid that she has given his pig-tail a sharp little pull.

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And all because he did not use his chop-sticks nicely, as she told him to.

So he spilled his rice on his new blue blouse!

As he lay in bed, the moon shone down on him gently. It almost seemed to be sorry for him.

He was very hungry and very unhappy.

He looked up at the kind moon. He began to wonder if it was supper-time up there, and whether they liked rice.

All at once a little hand touched him, and a kind voice said: —

"Here, dear Yum Sing, I have brought you a bowl of rice. The little rabbit in the moon sent it to you."

"Oh! Is there a rabbit in the moon?" said Yum Sing.

"Why, yes. Can you not see him from here pounding his rice in a bowl?"

Little Yum Sing forgot that he was hungry. He jumped out of bed and ran to the window.

There he flattened his little yellow nose — that was already flat enough — against the pane.

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I wonder if you made your nose *very* flat against the window-pane if you could see the rabbit?

Yum Sing did.

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FROM THE PUMPKIN

Ah! on Thanksgiving day,
When from East and from West,
From North and from South,
Come the pilgrim and guest,
When the gray-haired New Englander
Sees round his board
The old broken links
Of affection restored;
When the care-wearied man
Seeks his mother once more,
And the worn matron smiles
Where the girl smiled before,
What moistens the lip
And what brightens the eye?
What calls back the past,
Like the rich pumpkin pie?
Oh, fruit loved of boyhood!
The old days recalling,
When wood grapes were purpling,
And brown nuts were falling!
When wild, ugly faces
We carved in its skin,
Glaring out through the dark,

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With a candle within!
When we laughed round the corn heap,
With hearts all in tune,
Our chair a broad pumpkin,—
Our lantern the moon,
Telling tales of the fairy
Who travelled like steam
In a pumpkin-shell coach,
With two rats for her team!

—JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER.

THE FALL OF THE LEAF

ALL summer long the leaves have been working hard. Through them chiefly has the extra water been given out. They have breathed for the whole plant. And most important of all, in them has the plant's food been digested.

But they have not labored in vain. Not only has the plant grown through their efforts, but a supply of food has been stored away in different parts.

Now that autumn has come, the leaves begin to die. Before they die they give to the plant all that they still hold in the way of food.

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But although they are almost dead, how beautiful they are in their dresses of yellow and orange, red and purple!

And at last they fall from the tree.

But even now their work is not yet finished.

The faded and torn leaves become gradually mixed with the soil.

The earthworm attends to that.

And they give to seedlings the last of their strength. Fed with this rich food, these in turn become great trees, and add to the world's good things a yearly crop of leaves.

FROM THE LAST WALK IN AUTUMN

ALONG the river's summer walk,
The withered tufts of aster nod;
And trembles on its arid stalk
The hoar plume of the golden-rod.

And on a ground of sombre fir,
And azure studded juniper,
The silver birch its buds of purple shows,
And scarlet berries tell where bloomed
the sweet wild rose!

—JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER.

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THE KIND OLD OAK

It was almost time for winter to come.

The little birds had all gone far away, for they were afraid of the cold.

There was no green grass in the fields. There were no pretty flowers in the garden.

Many of the trees had dropped all their leaves. Cold winter, with its snow and ice, was coming.

At the foot of an old oak-tree, some sweet little violets were still in blossom.

"Dear old oak," said they, "winter is coming. We are afraid that we shall die of the cold."

"Do not be afraid, little ones," said the oak. "Close your yellow eyes in sleep and trust to me. You have made me glad many a time with your sweetness. Now I shall take care that the winter may do you no harm."

So the violets closed their pretty eyes and went to sleep. They knew that they could trust the kind old oak.

And the great tree softly dropped red leaf after red leaf upon them until they were all covered over.

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The cold winter came with its snow and ice. But it could not harm the little violets.

Safe under the friendly leaves of the old oak, they slept and dreamed happy dreams, until the warm rains of spring came and waked them again.

LEAVES AT PLAY

SCAMPER, little leaves, about
In the autumn sun;
I can hear the old Wind shout,
Laughing as you run.
And I haven't any doubt
That he likes the fun.

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When you've run a month or so,
Very tired you'll get;
But the same old Wind, I know,
Will be laughing yet
When he tucks you in your snow,
Downy coverlet.

So run on and have your play,
Romp with all your might;
Dance across the autumn day,
While the sun is bright,
Soon you'll hear the old Wind say,
"Little leaves, good-night!"

—FRANK DEMPSTER SHERMAN

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THE ANT AND THE GRASSHOPPER

ALL summer long the ants gathered grain and carried it to their nests.

One fine day in winter they took it out to dry.

A poor starving grasshopper saw them at work. He begged them to give him a little food.

The ants asked him why he had not saved food during the summer.

He said, "I did not have time enough. I sang all day long."

The ants laughed at him, and said: —

"You were foolish to sing all summer. No wonder that you have gone to bed without a supper all winter."

— *Adapted from* ÆSOP.

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THE CODDLING MOTH

WHO has not seen "a wormy apple"? We all know that a "naughty old worm" did it. But what do we know about this worm that is not a worm? Not much, I am afraid.

The apple worm ruins from a fourth to a half of our apple crop every year. And yet the worm has not been with us much more than a hundred years, although it has been in Europe much longer. Two hundred years before Christ the old Romans wrote of "wormy apples."

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How did the worm come to us from Europe? Why, very much as we came over, in ships, to be sure.

And when once it came here, how it spread! Every barrel of apples carries dozens of them around the country. And now we have to look over even a small basket very carefully in order to find even a few that are not wormy.

The caterpillar, usually called apple worm, is about three-fourths of an inch long, when full grown.

Sometimes it is white, and sometimes quite pink.

This caterpillar began life as a small white egg laid by a moth on a very young green apple.

In about a week the egg hatches out into the tiniest of caterpillars. It wanders up and down the surface of the small apple until it finds a place where it can get its first meal.

Most caterpillars begin eating in the eye of the apple. Here we will oftenest find the brown masses that ought to tell us what is at work.

When once it gets into the apple, it makes straight for the core. Here it feeds for the greater part of the rest of its life in the fruit.

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As it feeds, it increases in size. It is said that it sheds its skin no less than four times while feeding in the fruit. This it does to accommodate itself to its gradually increasing size.

Several days before the caterpillar is full grown, it eats a passage towards the outside.

It chooses always the shortest route. Very often this is the entrance passage.

The caterpillar does not usually leave the apple until this has fallen to the ground. Then they crawl to some good place and prepare to become a moth.

Sometimes they spin a cocoon in the tree itself, perhaps in a crotch of a branch or under the bark. Sometimes they spin on near-by fences or in piles of rubbish.

But they never settle on the ground or in the grass.

Cocoons may be found on old rough-barked apple trees, any time from August until spring.

The birds eat many of them.

But in the spring survivors come out as moths.

Then Mrs. Moth lays her eggs again, and the whole story is repeated.

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THE CLOTHES-MOTH

THE little yellowish moth seen flitting about the rooms are harmless enough. In point of fact they cannot eat anything at all.

But they lay eggs that hatch out into animals that do a world of harm.

For this reason it is well to kill the moths. But it would do much more good to kill the "worms" themselves. For most likely the moth has already done all the damage that she can. She is only laughing at you now, for perhaps her eggs are already laid in your best dress.

You remember that Job wrote of "the garment that is moth-eaten."

One of the old Roman writers, Pliny, knew them, too. He said of the larva ("worm"): —

"It is clad in a jacket. It gradually forms for itself its own garment, like the snail in its shell. When this is taken from it, it immediately dies. But when its garment is large enough, it changes into a chrysalis. From this, at the proper time, the moth issues."

Pliny has told just what happens in our com-

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mon clothes-moth. It is never seen free from its jacket, which it makes from the fur or wool in which it lives.

As the larva grows, it is necessary to enlarge the jacket.

Without leaving it, the larva makes a slit and inserts a gore. It also gores the other side. Then it lengthens the case by making additions to either end.

The outside of the case is rough and matted, but the inside is lined with softest silk.

How do people know this, do you ask?

In a very strange way.

They have taken the larva in its jacket made of blue wool, for example. They have put him in a mass of soft red. Of this material he makes his first gores and other additions. By placing him for a time in homes of different colors, his jacket is made to tell the whole story.

When it is quite grown up, the larva attaches its case by a silken thread to the material on which it has been feeding. After three weeks' rest, it comes out of its case a full-grown moth.

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WINTER STORIES AND POEMS

WINTER

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DECEMBER

HEAP on more wood! the wind is chill,
But let it whistle as it will,
We'll keep our Christmas merry still.

—SIR WALTER SCOTT.

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DECEMBER

SNOWFLAKES

Out of the sky they come
  Wandering down the air,
Some to the roofs and some
  Whiten the branches bare.

Some in the empty nest,
  Some on the ground below,
Until the world is dressed
  All in a gown of snow.

Dressed in a fleecy gown
  Out of the snowflakes spun;
Wearing a golden crown, —
  Over her head the sun.

Out of the sky again
  Ghosts of the flowers that died
Visit the earth, and then
  Under the white drifts hide.

— Frank Dempster Sherman.

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DIANA AND NIOBE

DIANA was a great huntress. Her arrow never missed the mark.

Followed by her dogs, she went over hill and valley, forest and plain.

She often joined her brother, Apollo, in the chase.

They were very fond of each other, and of their mother Latona.

Let me tell you how they punished a proud mortal who thought herself as great as Latona.

This was Niobe. She had seven strong sons and seven beautiful daughters.

She said: "Who is this Latona, that everybody should praise her?

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"She has but two children. I have seven times as many.

"Even if I should lose some of mine, I should not be as poor as Latona with her two only."

When the goddess Latona heard this, she was very angry. Calling her mighty son Apollo and her daughter Diana, she told them of it.

They darted through the air to the earth, and alighted on the towers of the city.

The clouds hid them from view.

On a broad plain the young men of the city were playing games. Among them were the sons of Niobe.

The oldest was trying to drive a pair of fiery horses.

Apollo drew his bow. The arrow sped, and he fell dead.

Two others were wrestling. One arrow pierced them both.

Then one after another fell, until the seven sons of Niobe lay dead.

Their mother wept, and kissed them. "Cruel Latona," she cried, "you have done this. But I am still richer than you, for I have my seven daughters."

She had hardly spoken when Diana drew her

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bow. One after another of Niobe's daughters fell beside their brothers.

Only one was left. The poor mother begged for the life of her youngest daughter.

"Spare me this one," she cried, as she covered it with her arms.

But Diana had no pity.

The wretched mother grew stiff with grief.

There was no sign of life about her.

Her eye was fixed, her cheek was pale, the breeze did not move her hair.

Her tongue stuck to the roof of her mouth, her arm made no motion, her foot took no step.

She was changed to stone, within and without, but her tears continued to flow.

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THE STAR AND THE LILY

One evening an old chief sat at the door of his wigwam smoking his pipe.

A crowd of little Indian boys and girls gath ered about him and begged for a story.

This is what he told them : —

Once all the people were happy. There was no sickness and no war. The white man had not come.

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There was plenty of game in the forest. There was plenty of fruit on the trees.

The earth was covered with a carpet of flowers. There were birds of more beautiful plumage than now.

The red man loved the stars. For he believed that in them the good people lived who had been taken home by the Great Spirit.

One night they saw a star that shone brighter than all others.

Night after night, as they watched it, it came nearer and nearer.

At last it rested on the top of a tree like a beautiful bird.

One morning it spoke to a young warrior of the tribe and said: —

"Young Brave! I have looked down upon your people for a long time. I have grown to love them and their beautiful land, with its flowers and birds and rivers.

"I have left my two sisters — the Morning and Evening stars — in the sky, and have come to live with you forever.

"Ask your wise men what form I shall take, and where I shall live to be most loved."

The star was asked to choose for herself.

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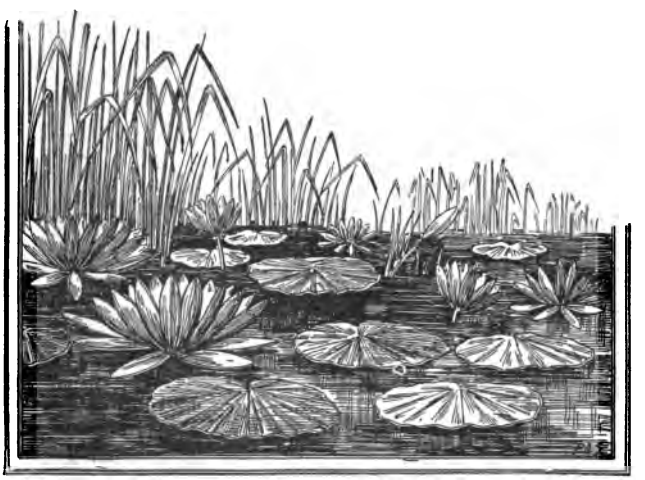
"I know where I shall live," she said joyfully,— "in the lap of the water, where I can see the gliding canoe. Then I can kiss the naked feet of the little children as they play on the bank of the stream."

With these words she flew down to the water, where she saw herself reflected.

The next morning, thousands of white flowers were seen on the lake.

Children, when you see the water-lily, take it in your hands and hold it to the skies, that it may see its sisters in heaven.



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SLEEP, BABY, SLEEP

SLEEP, baby, sleep!
Thy father watches his sheep;
Thy mother is shaking the dreamland tree,
And down falls a little dream on thee—
Sleep, baby, sleep!

Sleep, baby, sleep!
The large stars are the sheep;
The little stars are the lambs, I guess,
And the bright moon is the shepherdess—
Sleep, baby, sleep!

THE WHITE BEAR

I

THERE was once a beautiful woman named Callisto. She was dearly loved by Jupiter.

She had a dear little son called Arcas. He was her pride and joy.

But still she loved the forests and the woods, the trees and the birds, almost as much.

With her dogs at her heels, and her quiver of

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arrows across her shoulder, she hunted the wild deer and the fierce bear.

When she went to the chase with her companions, she was the merriest of the party.

One day as she was going gayly through the forest, she met the jealous Juno, who hated her.

Juno stood still, raised her hand, and said some strange words.

Then a terrible thing happened to poor Callisto.

Her arms grew shaggy, and were covered with hair.

Her nails grew into pointed claws.

Her hands turned to paws and she had to stand on all fours.

Her beautiful mouth that was always smiling wore an ugly grin.

Her sweet voice was changed to the fierce growl of a hungry bear.

Poor Callisto!

Now she runs from her own dogs in terror.

But she runs from the bears, too; for she forgets that she is herself a bear.

More than all does she grieve for her dear little son Arcas.

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For although she had a bear's body, she still had a loving human heart.

She would never see him again!

Even if she met him, the child would be frightened if she tried to hug him.

Nobody wants a hug from a bear!

So the years went by, and poor Callisto lived hidden in the forest.

THE WHITE BEAR

II

THESE years had changed Arcas from a little boy to a young man.

Like his mother, he was very fond of hunting.

One day he followed a deer into the forest.

All at once, he found himself in front of a great white bear.

He lifted his spear to pierce its heart.

But the eyes of the bear looked at him so sadly and so lovingly, that he did not strike the blow.

Just then Jupiter appeared, and snatched the spear from his hand.

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The great god carried both the mother and son up to the starry sky.

There he put them in the heavens to shine forever.

Now the people on earth look up to the sky and say, "There is the Great Bear, and there is the Little Bear."

To Arcas, the Little Bear, Jupiter gave a great work to do.

He holds in its place the star which guides all travellers on their way, — the wonderful North Star.

If you should try to find the Great Bear in

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the sky some starry night, I am afraid that you will not see anything that looks like a bear.

But you will see something that looks like a great dipper. There are three bright stars in the handle, and four bright stars in the cup This is Callisto.

Not far from her is Arcas, looking, for all the world, like a small dipper.

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THE TREE IN WINTER

THE tree was cold, the tree was bare,
She shivered and shook in the frosty air,
Then she called to her friend, the dear kind May,
"O bring me a leafy robe, I pray!"

But the spring had journeyed far away,
And would not return for many a day;
So old Jack Frost, that good little elf,
Said, "I'll make the tree a gown myself!"

He wove a robe all snowy white,
From frozen mist, with ice-fringe bright,
And the pretty tree, in her new gown dressed
Could not tell whether leaves or snow were best.

—ELEANOR SMITH.

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THE LAW OF THE WOOD

NEAR a grove of Spruce Firs, which grew in a beautiful wood with many other trees, stood a Silver Birch.

All summer long she had watched the Spruce trees getting into every one's way, and even into one another's.

THE SILVER BIRCH

One morning she awoke to find that the branches of the nearest tree were scratching her beautiful bark.

"You ought to give way a little," said the

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Birch. "It would be more agreeable to your neighbors and more comfortable to yourselves."

"We are quite comfortable as we are," answered the Spruce; "so why and to whom should we give way?"

THE SPRUCE

"To me and to all your neighbors," said the Birch.

"Never," answered the Spruce.

"Never, never, never," echoed all the other Spruces, in a loud voice. A squirrel, who was sitting on a tree near by, dropped the cone from which she had been picking the seeds. She was frightened at the noise.

Many weeks passed by. Beautiful little cones hung on the branches of the Spruce trees.

The grove looked to be in a green and flourishing condition. But within all was brown and dry.

The summer had been very hot and sultry. The air in the Spruce grove became close and

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unhealthy. The vapor that rose from the earth after heavy rains was never blown away by the fresh breezes.

And all this was because the trees would not give way even to each other.

"What can it matter," said they, "whether we are green inside? Still, I do wonder why one part is more green than another."

"It is absurd for you to wonder about it," said the Birch. "No tree could prosper who insisted upon growing in his own and everybody else's way."

"My dear friend," said a Spruce, "you are very unjust. Our rule is to go our own way and let everybody else do the same."

"Everybody cannot go his own way when we all live together," answered the Birch. "Give way one to another, is the law of the wood."

Many months passed by. All the Spruce trees were dead, except one which happened to stand a little apart from the others.

At last this one was cut down by the owner of the wood for a Christmas tree.

It stood in a brightly lighted room, covered with lights and presents.

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The children rushed forward. They tumbled one over another, each going his own way without caring what happened to his neighbor.

The parents held them back, telling one to give place to another.

Then the Spruce Fir understood the fate of his friends.

He repeated to himself the words of the Silver Birch.

"Give way to one another. This is the law of the wood."

THE HEMLOCK TREE

O hemlock tree! O hemlock tree! How faithful are thy branches!
Green not alone in summer time,
But in the winter's frost and rime!
O hemlock tree! O hemlock tree! How faithful are thy branches!

— *From the German, by* LONGFELLOW.

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GOLDFISH

Not long since I spent a fortnight at the house of a friend who kept a globe of goldfish. It was here that I first observed how they die. As soon as the creature sickens, the head sinks lower and lower. It stands, as it were, on its head. At last, getting weaker, the tail turns over. It floats on the surface of the water with its belly uppermost.

The reason why fishes, when dead, float in this manner is very plain. When the body is no longer balanced by the fins, the broad back, which is much heavier, sinks below.

Some that delight in gold and silver fish believe that they need no food.

True it is that they will live a long time without apparent food. Yet they must draw some supply from the small water animals.

Toss them crumbs at any time and they seize them with greediness.

When they want to move a little, they gently wave the arm fins. But it is with their strong tail only that they and all fishes shoot forward rapidly.

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It has been said that the eyes of fishes are immovable. But they turn them forward or backward, as occasions require.

They take little notice of a lighted candle, though close to their heads. But they flounce and seem much frightened by a sudden stroke of the hand against the support on which the bowl is hung.

This is especially true when they have been motionless and are perhaps asleep.

As fish have no eyelids, it is not easy to find out when they are sleeping. For their eyes are always open.

Gold and silver fish were natives of China and Japan. But they thrive very well in our climate and streams.

—*Adapted from* GILBERT WHITE'S "*Natural History of Selborne.*"

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THE SHELL

See, what a lovely shell!
Small and pure as a pearl,
Lying close at my foot,
Frail, but a work divine,
Made so fairily well,
With delicate spine and whorl,
How exquisitely minute,
A miracle of design.

The tiny shell is forlorn,
Void of the little living will
That made it stir on the shore.
Did he stand at the diamond door
Of his house in a rainbow frill?
Did he push, when he was uncurled,
A golden foot or a fairy horn,
Through his dim water world?

— Alfred Tennyson.

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CHRISTMAS

THE time draws near the birth of Christ;
The moon is hid; the night is still;
The Christmas bells from hill to hill
Answer each other in the mist.

Four voices in four hamlets round,
From far and near, on mead and moor,
Swell out and fail, as if a door
Were shut between me and the sound:

Each voice four changes of the wind,
That now dilate, and now decrease;
Peace and good-will, good-will and peace,
Peace and good-will, to all mankind.

— *From* ALFRED TENNYSON'S "*In Memoriam.*"

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JANUARY

Ring in the valiant man and free,
The larger heart, the kindlier hand;
Ring out the darkness of the land;
Ring in the Christ that is to be.

— Alfred Tennyson.

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NEW YEAR SONG

THERE's a New Year coming, coming
Out of some beautiful sphere,
His baby eyes bright
With hope and delight:
We welcome you, Happy New Year.

There's an Old Year going, going
Away in the winter drear;
His beard is like snow
And his footsteps are slow:
Good-by to you, weary Old Year!

There is always a New Year coming;
There is always an Old Year to go;
And never a tear
Drops the Happy New Year
As he scatters his gifts on the snow.

—LUCY LARCOM.

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JANUS

If you gave a rat-tat-tat on the gate and some one like this opened it, what would you do? I think you would run away.

Well, this strange man with two faces was the door-keeper of Jupiter's palace on Mount Olympus.

His name is Janus.

He still stands guard at the gateways of the years.

Every New Year's day at the rat-tat-tat of Father Time, he opens wide the doors of the New Year.

Then we all enter and are glad.

We say to each other "A Happy New Year!"

After we have played a little while, and worked a little while, and may be cried a little while, some of us come out. And then Janus opens for us the door of another year.

Do you know now why we call New Year's day the first of *January?*

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CHRONOS

OLD Father Time used to be called King Chronos.

With his wife, the beautiful Earth Mother, Rhea, he ruled over his people for many years.

He would have been very happy but for one thing.

He was afraid that some day his son would be king in his place.

This troubled him so much that he tried to think of a way to prevent it.

You could never guess what a strange way he chose!

When the little new-born baby was put in his arms, he wrapped it up and swallowed it!

In this way he swallowed eleven of his sons and daughters.

Rhea, their mother, was very sad at losing her children in this way.

So when the twelfth baby was born, she hid him, and gave a stone wrapped up instead of a child to Chronos.

He quickly swallowed it.

Then she took the little baby to an island far away.

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Here he grew strong and beautiful.

He was taught by a wise teacher.

At last he was a man, and learned that King Chronos was his father.

He heard, too, of the cruel way in which his brothers and sisters had been destroyed.

He travelled back to his father's kingdom, and took away from him his throne.

He made him give back to Rhea all the children he had swallowed.

Then King Chronos began a long journey, which has never ended.

He never stops. He does not rest a second.

WINTER: SONG OF THE WRENS

THE frost is here
And fuel is dear,
And woods are sear,
And fires burn clear,
And frost is here,
And has bitten the heel of the going year.

Bite, frost, bite!
You roll up away from the light

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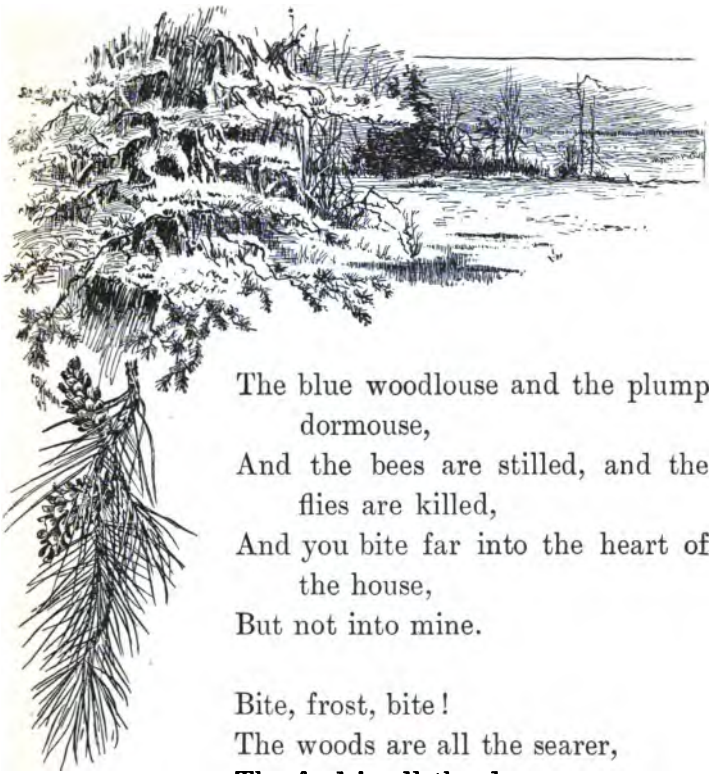

The blue woodlouse and the plump
dormouse,
And the bees are stilled, and the
flies are killed,
And you bite far into the heart of
the house,
But not into mine.

Bite, frost, bite!
The woods are all the searer,
The fuel is all the dearer,
The fires are all the clearer,
My spring is all the nearer,
You have bitten into the heart of the earth,
But not into mine.

— TENNYSON.

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WINTER

When icicles hang by the wall
And Dick the shepherd blows his nail,
And Tom bears logs into the hall,
And milk comes frozen home in pail;
Then nightly sings the starry owl
Tuwhoo!
Tuwhit! Tuwhoo!

—Shakespeare.

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THE STORY OF THE CHRISTMAS TREE

In olden times all trees were sacred things. They were temples of nature. And in these holy houses people worshipped their gods.

The people of northern Europe used to worship the ash. This they did because they believed that it was the world tree.

They thought that the earth was flat. In the middle of it rose Iggdrasil, the tree of the universe. It was a great ash. Its branches covered the world, and under its shade the gods held their councils. It had three roots. One was in heaven. Another was in the land of the frost giants. And the last was in the underworld.

At each root was a sacred fountain of wisdom and knowledge. An eagle sat in the topmost branches, keeping a sharp lookout.

Under the tree was hidden the horn of doom. When this should sound, the great ash would crack and bend. The sea would rise. The fire god would come forth and burn up the world. Then would arise a new world better than this, and with a new ash tree in the centre.

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At least this is what the people of the north believed.

The people of ancient England held the oak to be a sacred tree. They thought that it belonged to the God of Thunder. Groves of oak were their temples. Under oak trees they offered their sacrifices and tried their prisoners.

Their priests wore oak wreaths. They were called *Druids*. This word means "men of the oak."

Their sacred fires were of burning oak log. The Yule log burnt at their great feast was of oak.

Every year the people put out the house fires. Then they rekindled them from the sacred fires. This was the beginning of a custom in England which has only just died out. In every house a Yule log was laid on the Christmas fire. Then it was taken off half burnt. It was kept all the year to relight the next Christmas fire.

The pine was the sacred tree of the Germans. The Christmas tree was a picture of the old world tree, with the eagle on the top, and the lights were the stars shining among the branches.

When the Germans became Christians they could not give up loving their old pine tree.

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And so they turned it into a Christmas tree. On top they set an angel or a dove instead of the eagle. And they let its lamps tell a new story of the night when the Light came into the world.

A young spruce was the tree generally chosen.

It is not so very long ago that friends of children, knowing the delightful hours spent in Germany around the Christmas tree, introduced the fashion here.

Perhaps there is a little fir tree even now in your yard that brings back to your mind a happy night last Christmas, — twinkling lights, presents, and fun.

Then you remember how afterwards you gathered around the piano. You sang of the shepherds, who watched their flocks by night long ago. They saw a vision of angels, and heard heavenly music, and glad tidings of great joy, and of the baby whom they found in the manger.

You remember how afterwards you went up to your little room. You looked out at the twinkling stars. Your heart became full of longing. And you prayed that you might have in you the spirit of Christmas, peace on earth and good-will towards men.

— *Adapted from* MRS. DYSON'S "*Stories of the Trees.*"

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THE PINES AND FIRS

ALL the pines and firs have wonderful pipes and reservoirs of sticky turpentine juice inside their bark. But each kind of fir has its own way of making its stores. So we get different kinds of resins and turpentine and balsam from different trees.

It is these stores of resin that make the pine wood burn so brightly.

The Highland chief needed no gas for his great illuminations. He had only to call his followers to hold up branches of blazing pine.

Fire — fir: how much alike these two words are! Were the first fires made of fir wood? or was this tree called a fir because it made such good fires? These words are so old that we can only guess their history.

Those of you who like pretty things, have often fingered admiringly a bright shining necklace of amber beads. The pieces of amber from which the beads were cut were picked up on the shore of the Baltic Sea. It is supposed that once upon a time some great pines or firs

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dropped their gummy juice. This then hardened into these beautiful, transparent stones.

Pines and firs are some of the greatest tree givers. They seem never tired of giving.

Not only do they give us tar and turpentine, resin, balsam, and amber, but most of all they give themselves. How many things can you think of that are made of pine wood? But common fir wood has a name of its own. Each plank of it is called a *deal.*

How can the great trees be carried from the mountain tops, do you suppose? The streams are the carriers. They float the great trunks down to the river. There they are tied together in great rafts. Thus they float down to their new home. Sometimes, when the nearest stream is a long distance from the trees, a wooden slide is made to it.

In winter, water is poured down the slide. When it freezes, the trees easily shoot down the slippery way to the stream.

— *Adapted from* MRS. DYSON'S "*Stories of the Trees.*"

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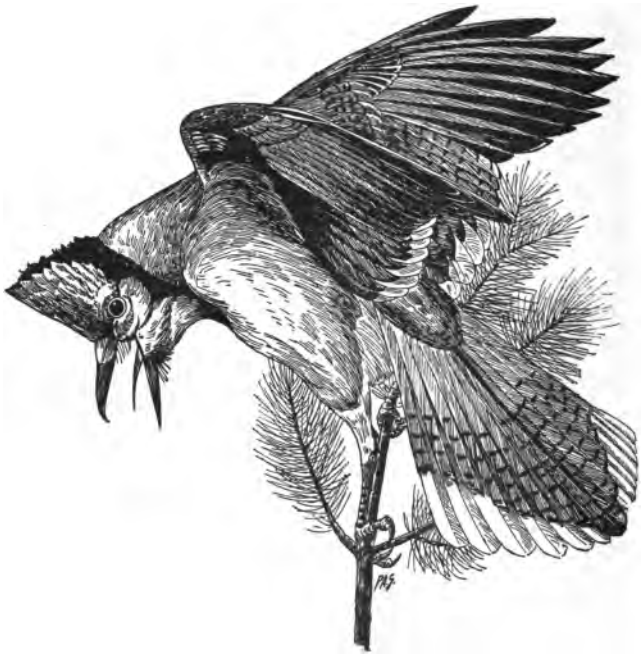
THE BIRDS

BLUE JAY



"WHAT, is the jay more precious than the lark,
Because his feathers are more beautiful?"

—SHAKESPEARE.

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THE BROKEN WING

Six little eagles lived in a nest with their father and mother.

One evening the old birds did not come home.

They had been killed by the gun of the hunter.

The young ones did not know this.

They had never been out of their soft nest. They had never even heard of the cruel things that are done in the big world.

But they felt very lonely and very hungry.

All night they cuddled close to each other, and the baby cried pitifully.

When morning came, Strong Wing, the oldest, said to them: —

"Brothers and sisters, I am afraid that our dear parents will never come back again. I must take their place.

"Be good children while I go to find some breakfast for you."

Soon he came back with a nice fat duck!

As the days went by, he taught the younger ones how to fly, and where to find good dinners.

But one sad day Strong Wing did not come home.

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Once more the little family were in sorrow.

The next day they started to look for their kind brother.

They flew high and low and called and called him.

At last they heard a faint cry, and there was Strong Wing!

He was not able to fly, for one of his strong wings was broken.

What a misfortune!

For you must know that this little family had meant to move in a few days to a new house in a warmer land.

"You must still go," said Broken Wing, "for the winter will kill you."

"And leave you!" said they. "No, indeed! You cared for us when we were little and helpless. Now we will care for you."

So they found a hollow place in the trunk of a tree. There they placed their wounded brother.

Then they gathered in a large store of things to eat for the winter.

Two of them *did* go to the warm South.

They loved their brother as much as the others. But they said: "If two hungry mouths go away, the food will last longer."

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Everything went well.

Broken Wing became Strong Wing again.

The little baby eagle had now almost grown up. He used to go in search of food like the others.

But he never brought anything home!

"The big owl that lives in the tree near by takes it from me," he cried.

The next day Strong Wing went with him.

He watched the youngster catch a fat, white duck and soar up with it.

True enough! Just as he was near home, the owl flew out.

But Strong Wing was "Fleet Wing," too.

He struck his talons in the back of Mr. Owl.

"Oh! Oh! Let me go, and I shall never do it any more!" cried the owl.

"Do you promise?" said Strong Wing.

"Yes! Yes!" said the owl.

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Then Strong Wing let him go, first telling him what herbs would cure his sore back.

Maybe Baby Eagle was not proud to throw down his fat, white duck on the table!

Just as he did it, company came for dinner!

Who was it, do you think?

Why, the two little brothers from the South!

They had come home, for they knew that spring was in the North.

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A BIRD STORY

ONE spring day, a pair of birds who had never seen a winter came to our fields.

One of the birds began to sing. Then the other bird said: —

"Who told you to sing?"

He answered: —

"The flowers told me, and the bees told me. The winds and leaves told me. The blue sky told me, and YOU told me."

Then his mate said: —

"When did I tell you to sing?"

He answered: —

"Every time that you brought in grass, or hair, or feathers for the nest. For I felt so happy that I must sing."

By and by there were five pretty eggs in the nest.

Then the happy birds looked down at the people who passed by, and felt sorry for them because they were not birds.

One day, when the father bird came home, the mother bird said: —

"Oh! what do you think has happened?"

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"What?"

"One of my eggs has been peeping and moving!"

Pretty soon another egg moved under her feathers, then another, and another.

Then the five little birds were hatched out.

The father bird sang louder than ever.

The mother bird wanted to sing, too. But she had no time. So she turned her song into work.

The little birds were so hungry, that it kept both parents busy feeding them.

Soon the little birds were big enough to begin to fly.

Then they grew strong enough to find food. They built their own nests, and sang their own songs.

The old birds then were silent.

"Why don't you sing?" said the mother.

"I can't sing. I can only think and think."

"What are you thinking about?" she said.

"I am thinking how everything changes. The leaves are falling, the flowers are all going. Something calls me. I feel as if I would like to fly far away."

"Let us fly together!" said the mother bird.

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Then they rose into the air.

They looked to the north. Far away they saw the snow coming.

They looked to the south. There they saw flowers and green leaves.

There they flew and flew, until they came to a land where there was no winter.

There flowers always blossom, and birds always sing.

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STORY OF THE PEACOCK

JUPITER dearly loved beautiful Io.

She lived all alone on the bank of a river.

Often she bathed in its cool waters.

When she plunged in, the little waves and ripples played about her as if they loved her.

Then, as she combed and braided her long hair, she used the smooth waters for a mirror.

They showed her her own sweet face and seemed to say "Pretty Io," "Pretty Io."

Juno was as cruel to Io as she had been to Latona.

She came down to the bank of the river where Io lived, meaning to do her some harm.

But instead of a pretty young girl, she saw only a gentle white cow grazing.

Juno could not understand it!

There it was, slowly munching the sweet grass, and hunting with its pink nostrils for the purple clover.

Its hide was white and glossy.

Its long horns were curved like the crescent of the moon.

It looked at Juno with eyes as soft as her own.

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"This is very strange," said Juno. "I must put Argus to watch this animal."

Now Argus had a hundred eyes in his head!

So, if he went to sleep with two eyes, as watchmen sometimes do, he still had ninety-eight eyes wide open!

All day long he let the white cow graze. At night he put a rope around her neck, and fastened her to a stake.

Now I must whisper in your ear a secret!

The gentle white cow was no other than beautiful Io herself!

Jupiter had changed her into this shape so that Juno would not find her.

But Juno, who was very wise, guessed who it was that the white cow hid.

Poor Io was very unhappy under the gaze of all those eyes.

She sometimes tried to put out her arms to Argus to beg him to let her go, but she had no arms.

Then she tried to speak to him, but she could only "moo" sadly.

At last Jupiter told Mercury the secret that I have told you, and sent him to set Io free.

Mercury dressed himself like a shepherd, took

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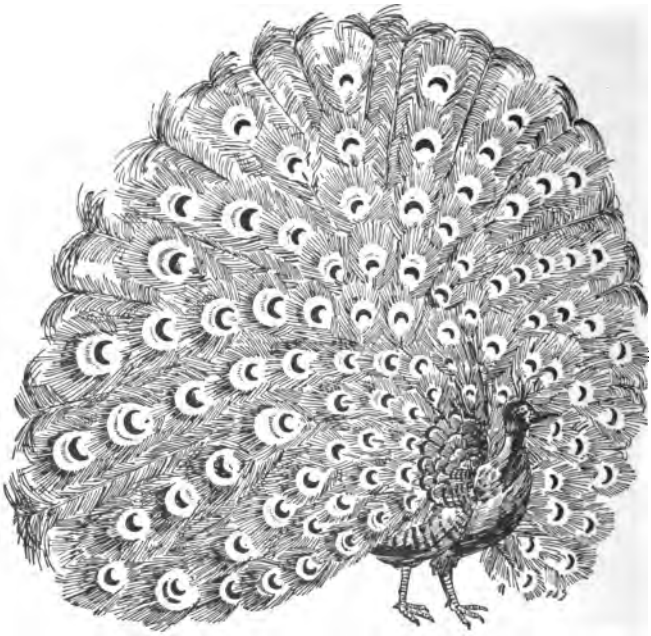
his flute and as he walked along the road played a tune upon it.

"Come here, young shepherd," called Argus. "Sit with me under the trees, and give me some music."



Mercury sat down and played the sweetest lullaby that ever was heard.

A "lullaby," you know, is what mother sings to put baby's two pretty eyes to sleep.

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Well, sure enough, one after another of the hundred eyes of Argus grew blinky and drowsy. At last all were asleep.

Then up jumped Mercury and killed the cruel monster, and set Io free.

Juno was sorry for her watchman. So she saved his eyes and put them in the tail of her peacock.

THE CROW'S CHILDREN

A HUNTSMAN, bearing his gun afield,
Went whistling merrily,
When he heard the blackest of black crows
Call out from a withered tree: —

"You are going to kill the thievish birds,
And I would if I were you;
But you mustn't touch my family
Whatever else you do!"

"But how shall I know which ones they are?
Do they resemble you?"
"Oh, no," said the crow, "they're the prettiest birds,
And the whitest that ever flew!"

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So off went the sportsman, whistling,
And off, too, went his gun;
And its startling echoes never ceased
Again till the day was done.

And the old crow sat untroubled,
Cawing away in her nook;
For she said, "He'll never kill my birds,
Since I told him how they look."

When, lo! she saw the hunter
Taking his homeward track,
With a string of crows as long as his gun
Hanging down his back.

"Alack, alack!" said the mother,
"What in the world have you done?
You promised to spare my pretty birds,
And you've killed them every one."

"Your birds!" said the puzzled hunter;
"Why, I found them in my corn;
And, besides, they are black and ugly
As any ever were born!"

"Get out of my sight, you stupid!"
Said the angriest of crows;
"How good and fair the children are,
There's none but a parent knows!"

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"Ah! I see, I see," said the hunter,
"But not as you do, quite;
It takes a mother to be so blind
She can't tell black from white!"

— PHŒBE CARY.

INDIAN STORY OF THE EAGLE

PERHAPS Jupiter liked the eagle for the same reason that Uncle Sam does. He is brave and soars high.

The Indians loved the eagle, too.

Their bravest chiefs wore the eagle's feathers in their hair when they went to battle.

They say that one day all the birds met together to try which could fly highest.

Some flew very swiftly, but soon became tired.

But the eagle flew beyond them all.

He was soon very near the sun.

Just as he thought that he would win the prize, what do you think happened?

A little gray linnet who had hid herself on the back of the great bird flew out.

She went up and up, higher than the eagle.

For the sly little thing had an easy ride on the eagle's back, and she was not tired.

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When she came down, she was bold enough to ask for the prize.

Do you think she should have got it?

"No," the judges said.

"The eagle not only soared higher than any one else, but he carried another bird on his back."

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WHY THE CROW IS BLACK

We often say "black as a crow."

Would it not sound strange to say "white as a crow"?

Yet once upon a time, they say, the crow was as white as the swan that sails on the lake in the park.

And it could sing sweeter than your canary.

More than this, it could talk much better than the parrot.

For that silly bird can only say what it has been taught.

But the crow could talk as plain as you, John.

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But now all the crows are black because there was once a wicked crow who liked to tell tales.

This beautiful snow-white crow hung in a cage, in the house of its master, Phœbus.

He was petted and smoothed and fed by the master's own hand.

But the crow was not grateful.

Although he could sing sweetly and talk prettily, he had a wicked heart.

He did not like his master's young wife.

He was jealous when his master talked and laughed with her.

One day Phœbus went on a long journey.

While he was away, the crow slyly watched and listened.

He hoped to have a long tale to pour into his master's ear when he returned.

At last Phœbus, all tired and dusty, entered the house. Then the crow began to tell him wicked lies.

Now Phœbus had a hot temper. He became so angry with his wife that he killed the poor lady.

Hardly had he done this awful thing than he remembered how good she was and how much he loved her.

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Then he wept over her, as if his heart would break.

But all at once, springing to his feet, he caught the wicked bird by the neck.

He shook him until all his snow-white feathers fell out!

"May you and your children for ever and ever be black, you teller of black tales!" he cried.

"But you shall tell no more tales!" he said. "You shall tell no more tales!

"From this day, you shall never speak another word.

"Instead of your sweet song, you shall have a dismal croak.

"And when people hear you, they will know that the black clouds are gathering, and the storm coming."

Now I am not sure that this is a true story, but this is true: —

Nobody likes the person who brings bad news.

— *Adapted from* CHAUCER'S "*Canterbury Tales.*"

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JUPITER

AWAY up above the clouds, on the top of a high mountain, lived Jupiter.

He was the mighty king of the sky and the earth.

So mighty was he that if he but nodded his head, the great mountain shook.

From his high place he could see all that went on upon the earth.

It was Jupiter who gathered the storm clouds. It was he who sent the thunder and lightning.

JUPITER

But he was kind, too. For he sent the gentle rains and winds that make the grass and flowers grow.

His house was a beautiful palace of gold on Mount Olympus.

Juno, his wife, sat beside him on a golden throne, with her feet in golden sandals.

She had large beautiful eyes like an ox.

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Did you know that the ox has eyes like soft brown velvet?

But, in spite of her soft eyes, Juno could be very angry and very cruel.

JUNO

Do you remember how cruel she was to Latona?

Jupiter's sons and daughters lived with him on Mount Olympus. They all had golden houses of their own.

Every day they took dinner together in the great hall of Jupiter's palace.

Beautiful Hebe, the youngest of his daughters, waited on the table and poured out the nectar.

They ate a delicious food called Ambrosia.

While they ate and drank, Apollo made music on his wonderful lyre.

After the feast was over and the sun went down, they all said "good-night" and went home.

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JUPITER'S EAGLE

THE eagle was Jupiter's bird.

He loved it as dearly as Uncle Sam loves it.

He sometimes fed it from his own hands.

The bird carried the messages for the great king.

Let me tell you on what a strange errand the eagle came to earth for one day.

Jupiter needed some one to fill pretty Hebe's place at table.

You remember that Hebe poured out the nectar for the gods.

Now she had married the great hero Hercules.

As Jupiter looked

HEBE

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down on the earth, he saw a crowd of little boys playing in a meadow.

Some were rolling over each other in the sweet grass.

Others were wrestling and boxing.

Some little ones were playing "tag."

One little urchin with fat brown legs was the swiftest runner of them all.

All at once something was seen coming down out of the sky.

At first it looked like a mere speck.

As it came nearer and nearer, the boys saw that it was a monstrous eagle.

Then its mighty wings made a noise like the wind.

It made one swift dart and swooped down on Ganymede.

It fastened its talons in his kilt, and carried him off from his playmates.

Higher and higher the eagle soared, with the poor little fellow kicking and screaming.

At last they came to Olympus. Here Ganymede, before long, became very happy, for Jupiter made a great pet of him.

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GANYMEDE

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FEBRUARY

WHEN the snowdrop, that changes the dead snow into a living blossom, and being the first living thing to offer its homage to God, dare not so much as lift up its eyes to Him, peers above the lawn, you know that it is February.

— *From* HUGH MACMILLAN'S "*The Clock of Nature.*"

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IN FEBRUARY

THE birds have been singing to-day,
And saying: "The spring is near!
The sun is as warm as in May,
And the deep blue heavens are clear."

The little bird on the boughs
Of the sombre snow-laden pine
Thinks: "Where shall I build me my house,
And how shall I make it fine?

"For the season of snow is past;
The mild south wind is on high;
And the scent of the spring is cast
From his wing as he hurries by."

The little birds twitter and cheep
To their loves on the leafless larch;
But seven foot deep the snow-wreaths sleep,
And the year hath not worn to March.

— JOHN ADDINGTON SYMONDS.

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THE WATER DROP

"WHAT next, I wonder?" asked a drop of water, as she found herself floating in the clear pool at the source of the river Aldur.

"What next? Nothing but change and stir! Nothing but going from one thing to another. Once underground, surely I might have been allowed to stay there."

"Why, dear me," said her companion, "it has always been so. It has always been change; nothing but change. First, perhaps, floating on the surface of the ocean, — then drawn down into its depths, — then carried up again to the surface, — then sucked into the air, — then condensed into part of a cloud overhead, — then rained down upon the thirsty earth, — then drunk up into a plant, — then allowed to ooze through the little mouths of one of its leaves, and dried away again into the air, — then dropped as dew upon the grass, — then caught up anew by the air, frozen by an icy wind into a hailstone, and showered down with many others into a river — then carried once more to the ocean: why, I

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might talk for an hour of the changes daily happening in one's life!

"Now frozen into snow, —now thawed into water,— now heated into steam, — now borne on the wings of a tempest, — now flowing over the earth's surface, — now deep underground in a mine — a strange story ours."

"But I never before knew a water drop who wanted to be still. Where did you come from?"

"From a very different place from this," answered the Drop.

"A place where everything is pure white, —where rivers do not sing, or streams run, — where things keep their own shape, and sunbeams have no power. I believe it is these Sunbeams which do all the mischief, — disturbing everybody, and letting nothing settle down."

"That must be a very odd country," said her companion.

"I prefer blue and green to white, and the Sunbeams are my friends. I never heard before of water which could not run or sing."

"We call water ice in my home."

"Then you are talking of the far north," said

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a sea gull, who had been listening to the conversation.

"Yes," answered the Drop.

"Think of leaving such a home for this! Think of exchanging the centre of a magnificent iceberg for this flurry and stir!"

The Sea Gull took a turn. "You may tell me about it," said he.

And this is another story!

THE WATER DROP

"I CANNOT remember how I first reached the icy north," said the Water Drop.

"I can only remember lying deep down in an enormous glacier, that is, a river of ice.

"We did move, but with such stately slowness! I suppose a few inches a day were the most that we ever accomplished. The stillness was deep."

"Really," said the Sea Gull, "and what happened next?"

"Nothing happened," said the Drop.

"Nothing at all?"

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"Certainly not — for long ages. Why should anything happen?

"The ice crept onwards, but so slowly that I scarcely knew it.

"Now and then a huge crevasse would open over me in the ice, and after a while it would close again."

"Well — and then?" said the Sea Gull.

"Well, then a change came, to my sorrow.

"The big glacier crept down an enormous valley, far into the sea.

"Some distance out, the deep waters pressed upwards and broke off huge pieces of ice. These floated away as icebergs.

"That was my fate.

"One day there came an awful, crashing split. It sounded as if the world itself were falling to pieces. A huge mountain of ice had snapped clean off from the foot of the glacier.

"And I was in the centre of that iceberg.

"I cannot say how long a time passed, while we floated to and fro.

"It was a wonderful life; but, alas, it came to an end.

"The iceberg grew smaller and smaller.

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"Then the Sunbeams thawed me, and the air drank me up.

"I was carried south by a strong breeze.

"After many days I joined a snow cloud and fell to the earth in a heavy storm.

"Since then I have known no rest, — nothing but stir and change. And what is to come next? who can tell?"

"Who, indeed?" echoed the Sea Gull, who was growing tired of his complaining companion.

"And what matter, so that you do your duty?" he added.

He did not wait to hear if the Water Drop agreed with him, but flew away.

— *Adapted from* ALICE GIBERNE'S "*Father Aldur.*"

THE FOUNTAIN

INTO the sunshine,
Full of the light,
Leaping and flashing
From morn till night;

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Into the moonlight,
Whiter than snow,
Waving so flower like
When the winds blow;

Into the starlight,
Rushing in spray,
Happy at midnight,
Happy by day;

Ever in motion,
Blithesome and cheery,
Still climbing heavenward,
Never aweary;

Glad of all weathers,
Still seeming best,
Upward or downward,
Motion thy rest;

Full of a nature
Nothing can tame,
Changed every moment,
Ever the same;

Ceaseless aspiring,
Ceaseless content,
Darkness or sunshine,
Thy element.

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Glorious fountain,
Let thy heart be
Fresh, changeful, constant,
Upward, like thee!

—JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

THE GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLET

THE dainty little golden-crowned kinglet shares with the winter wren and humming-bird the distinction of being one of the three smallest birds in the United States.

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It has a decided preference for evergreens. It searches tirelessly by the hour for insects in the rough bark of these trees. But it is so very small and restless that it may easily escape notice.

My first discovery of the bird was in December. I was looking in the spruces for the source of what I supposed to be the wiry note of some insect. A gleam of sunlight shot through the branches.

It touched the flaming crown of the kinglet, who was quite close and eying me inquisitively.

The outer wall of one of its nests was made of soft green mosses and lichens. Near the top were birds' feathers. These were placed with the quills down, thus making a little tent over the eggs.

The eggs were so numerous that they were piled in two layers.

It would be interesting to know how the tiny birds manage to hatch such a quantity of eggs. Perhaps they turn them daily in order to bring all to the warmth of the mother's body.

Or perhaps the top row hatches first. And then the young birds, by their warmth, may help to bring out their brothers and sisters.

—*Adapted from* MABEL OSGOOD WRIGHT'S "*Birdcraft.*"

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CHICKADEE

"THEN piped a tiny voice hard by,
Gay and polite, a cheerful cry,
Chick-a-dee-dee! saucy note
Out of sound heart and merry throat
As if it said, Good day, good sir!
Fine afternoon, old passenger!
Happy to meet you in these places
Where January brings few faces."

— RALPH WALDO EMERSON.

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ABRAHAM LINCOLN

BORN FEBRUARY 12, 1809

Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime;
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time.

—HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

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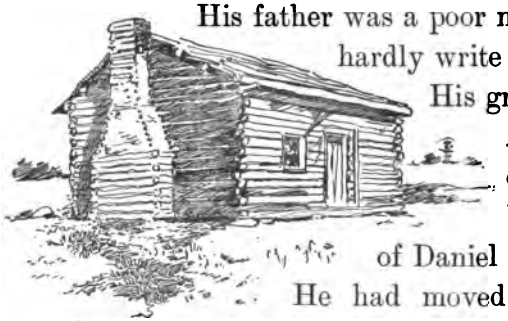
BOYHOOD OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN

ABRAHAM LINCOLN was born in a log cabin in the backwoods of Kentucky.

It was on February 12, 1809.

Here is a picture of the home in which the baby was born.

It was a poor cabin with only one room.



His father was a poor man, who could hardly write his own name.

His grandfather was Abraham Lincoln, who had been a friend of Daniel Boone.

He had moved to Kentucky about the same time as his friend Boone.

He had been killed by the Indians.

The little baby was named after his grandfather Abraham.

Little Abe grew into a healthy and happy child.

When he was seven years old, his father moved to Indiana.

Here he lived in a house of the poorest sort.

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It had only three sides.

The fourth was open to the weather.

There was no chimney, the fire was built out of doors in front of the open side.

Such a house was called a "half-face camp."

There was no floor.

Above the room was a little loft.

This was Abraham's bedroom.

Do not think that there was anything so fine as a stairway!

No, indeed!

The little fellow had to climb up on pegs driven in the wall.

His bed was a pile of dry leaves in a corner.

Abraham wore trousers of deer-skin.

His hat was a coon-skin.

On his feet were home-made moccasins.

His shirt, or blouse, was made of linsey-woolsey.

These were "pretty pinching times," he said.

You would be surprised to know all that little Abe could do when he was only ten years old.

He could drive a team of horses.

Handle a plough and sickle.

Thresh the wheat with a flail.

Chop wood and clear a field for planting corn.

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Help his father in carpenter work.

Help him to make chairs and shelves and cabinets.

He was ready to help the women, too.

He would carry water, make the fire, and tend the baby.

His father was so poor that sometimes Abraham had to go as a "hired boy" to a neighbor.

LINCOLN AT SCHOOL

With all this hard work little Abe was not getting much schooling.

He went to school "by littles," he says.

The old log schoolhouses of those days had large open fireplaces.

The boys had to chop the wood and build the fire.

The schoolmasters did not know very much themselves.

And they were often cruel men.

They whipped the boys with long switches that were used to drive the oxen.

But little Abe learned to read and write.

Above all, he learned to think for himself.

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When he did not understand anything, he went into the woods.

Here he thought the matter out and tried to put it into clear words.

He had not many books. Those he had he knew by heart.

The Bible, *Pilgrim's Progress*, and *Robinson Crusoe*, he read over and over again.

One time a neighbor lent him a *Life of Washington*.

The book got wet, and little Abe was afraid that it was spoiled.

The owner said: "Being as it's you, Abe, I won't be hard on you.

"Come over and shuck corn for three days, and the book is yours!"

Great was the joy of the boy to have it as his own.

When he ploughed a field, he let the horse rest at the end of every long row.

Then Abe took out his book and sat on the top rail of the fence to read.

He wrote letters for the people who did not know how to write.

Sometimes he did his sums by the light of the fire on the wooden fire-shovel for a slate.

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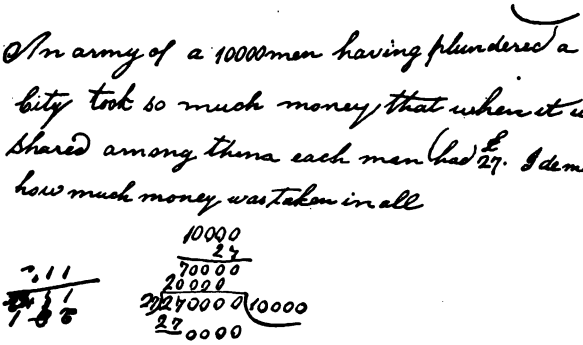
His pencil was a charred stick of wood.

The fences and logs around the farm were filled with his figures.

He wrote on the rails the thoughts that pleased him in the books that he had read.



Abraham Lincoln His Book

Here is one of Abraham's sums in his copy book.

You see he has proved it, too!

Do you sometimes prove your sums?

Some one says of him at this time: —

"Abe was the best penman in the neighborhood.

"One day I asked him to write some copies for me.

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"He wrote several of them, but one of them I have never forgotten.

"It was this: —

"'Good boys who to their books apply
Will all be great men by and by.'"

One of the things he wanted to learn was grammar.

He heard of a man eight miles away who had a grammar.

He walked to the place and borrowed it.

The schoolmaster helped him to understand it. Soon he had it by heart.

How eager he was to learn!

He learned much more than some boys and girls who have good teachers and plenty of books.

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THE DEATH OF LINCOLN

At last the war was ended.

The South had laid down its arms.

The soldiers of the North were coming home again.

Everybody was feeling happy and glad.

All at once an awful deed was done.

The President was shot by an assassin as he sat in the theatre April 14, 1865.

The whole people mourned for him; for he had a noble mind and a good heart.

Perhaps your father can tell you of the funeral of this good man.

How his body was carried from Washington to his home in Illinois.

How the people in the big cities crowded around his coffin.

How they wept over him.

They put on black clothes and shut their houses.

They mourned as if he were their father.

Kings and queens and princes in Europe sent wreaths for his grave.

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DEATH OF LINCOLN

Oh, slow to smite and swift to spare,
Gentle and merciful and just!
Who, in the fear of God, did'st bear
The sword of power, a nation's trust.

In sorrow by thy bier we stand,
Amid the awe that hushes all,
And speak the anguish of a land
That shook with horror at thy fall.

Thy task is done. The bond are free.
We bear thee to an honored grave,
Whose proudest monument shall be
The broken fetters of the slave.

Pure was thy life. Its bloody close
Hath placed thee with the sons of light,
Among the noble host of those
Who perished in the cause of Right.

— William Cullen Bryant.

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GEORGE WASHINGTON

BORN FEBRUARY 22, 1732

Broad-minded, higher-souled, there is but one
Who was all this and ours, and all men's,— Washington.

—JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

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THE VIRGINIA BOY

His home was a low-roofed, comfortable old farmhouse.

It was on a hill that sloped down to the Potomac River.

All about it was farm land or forest.

There was a broad piazza in front, and a great chimney at either end.

It had a big attic, such as boys and girls love to play in.

But perhaps you would think that it was not a very grand house.

There was only one story and a half.

There were no carpets on the floors.

There was no gas nor electric light.

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There were not many books, and the furniture was not very fine.

But it was a comfortable and happy home for all that.

Here, on February 22, 1732 was born George Washington.

There were already two boys in the house, Lawrence and Augustine.

They were half brothers to George.

With these boys and his own brothers and sisters, who were born after him, George always had plenty of company.

And he was fond of company and liked sport of all sorts.

He could ride a horse when he was only eight or nine years old.

He could swim and row. He was the fastest runner and the best wrestler among all the boys around.

No boy could "dare him" to anything that needed skill or strength.

He had to go to school, of course.

This was a little log schoolhouse, called a "field school."

Sometimes nothing would grow in a field. Then they built a log schoolhouse on it.

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It was to such a school that Washington was sent.

He and the other boys used to play soldier.

They had cornstalks for guns and gourds for drums.

Part of the boys played that they were French.

The other side, with Washington at the head, were Americans.

Then there would be a furious charge and a great battle.

It was all in play, of course.

The little captain would always be the victor.

So he grew up to be strong and manly.

There were not many things he was afraid of.

He never did an underhand thing. He hated a lie. He could always be trusted to keep his promises. He was obedient.

But he was just as fond of fun, just as boisterous and boyish a boy as you are.

He could not bear to let anything master him.

Once he made up his mind to break a wild colt that would not let anybody mount him.

He went into the field very early in the morning.

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He caught the colt and flung himself on its back.

But the young colt had as much spirit as its young master.

It plunged and reared. Still the boy kept his seat.

At last, worn out with the struggle, the colt fell dead.

Young Washington was very sorry for this.

When he went into breakfast, his mother asked some question about the colt.

"Madam," said Washington, "I killed the colt this morning."

It was his mother, now, who had to look after her son, for the father was dead.

What should she do with this big, high-spirited son of hers to make him a good man?

This was a question that gave her a great deal of anxiety.

He was now sixteen. He had learned in school a little bookkeeping and surveying.

The boy wanted to be a sailor. He dreamed of a free life on the blue waters.

His mother had almost given her consent.

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But, at last, the thought of losing her boy was too painful.

Washington loved his mother dearly. Rather than grieve her, he gave up his dream of the sea.

While Washington was at school, he wrote out, in his copy book, over fifty rules for behavior in company.

Here are some of these.

SOME OF WASHINGTON'S RULES FOR CONDUCT

In the presence of others, sing not to yourself, nor drum with your fingers or feet.

Turn not your back to others, especially in speaking.

Jog not the table on which another reads or writes.

Lean not on any one.

Read no letters, books, or papers in company. But when there is a necessity for doing it, you must ask leave.

Look not nigh when another is writing a letter.

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Let your countenance be pleasant, but in serious matters somewhat grave.

Strive not with your superiors in argument, but always submit your judgment to others with modesty.

Think before you speak.

When another speaks, be attentive yourself and disturb not the audience.

Undertake not what you cannot perform, but be careful to keep your promise.

Make no show of great delight in your food.

Feed not with greediness.

Cut your bread with a knife.

Lean not on the table.

Neither find fault with what you eat.

Labor to keep alive in your breast that little spark of celestial fire, called conscience.

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SPRING STORIES AND SONGS

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MARCH

Now are the winds about us in their glee,
Tossing the slender tree;
Whirling the sands about his furious car,
March cometh from afar.

— William Gilmore Simms.

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WRITTEN IN MARCH

I

THE cock is crowing,
The stream is flowing,
The small birds twitter,
The lake doth glitter,
The green field sleeps in the sun:
The oldest and youngest
Are at work with the strongest;
The cattle are grazing,
Their heads never raising,
There are forty feeding like one.

II

Like an army defeated,
The snow hath retreated,
And now doth fare ill
On the top of the bare hill;
The ploughboy is whooping anon, anon.
There's joy in the mountains;
There's life in the fountains;

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Small clouds are sailing,
Blue sky prevailing;
The rain is over and gone!

— WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

MARCH

EVERY month, like a good servant, brings its own character with it.

In comes January, and — let the weather be what it might before — immediately sets in severe cold and frost.

In February, wet — wet — wet, which ceases the moment March enters. And lo! there is a dry, chill air instead, with breaks of sunshine stealing here and there over the landscape. The clouds fly about with a brisker motion. The paths become at once solid and dry.

Twelve hours of March air will dry the earth almost to dustiness. "A peck of March dust is worth a king's ransom," says the old proverb. For it lets the farmer get in his seed.

March is a rude and sometimes boisterous month. But it gives us the first taste of spring.

— WILLIAM HOWITT.

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NEPTUNE

DEEP down under the waves, on the floor of the ocean, is built a beautiful palace.

Its walls are covered with pink sea-shells. In each shell lies a great white pearl.

Its roof is of coral; its floor is a soft green carpet of sea-moss.

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Here lives Neptune, the ruler of the seas.

Often he calls for his chariot, and rides to the top of the waters.

His horses have golden manes, and hoofs of brass.

The sharks and whales, and other monsters that live in the sea, play about his path as his chariot parts the waters.

Sometimes his son, Triton, goes before his father.

He carries a long sea-shell for a horn.

He blows a blast through this to let all things know that the great Neptune is coming.

Then the waves become smooth as glass.

Neptune carries in his hand his trident, a staff with three sharp points.

One blow of this staff will shake the earth.

All the winds obey him. Æolus, King of the Winds, is his servant.

Once he disobeyed his great master, and almost wrecked Æneas.

This is the story:—

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HOW ÆNEAS WAS SAVED

JUNO looked down from Olympus, and saw the ships of Æneas sailing on a smooth sea.

Now Æneas had once offended Juno, and made her very angry.

She had never forgiven him.

"I shall get the winds out, and pile the waters upon him," said cruel Juno.

She called to King Æolus, and begged him to set the winds loose.

He said he was afraid of his master, Neptune, who alone had the right to disturb the sea.

But she coaxed and coaxed, and, at last, he opened the door of the cave in which they were sleeping.

Then the fierce winds rushed out.

They howled and hissed like wild beasts.

They piled the waves up mountain high.

The ships of Æneas were overturned like toy ships. Some were dashed against the rocks.

Æneas and his men tried to save their lives by holding on to broken planks.

At last, when hope was almost gone, Æneas cried:

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"Father Neptune, help me! Help me!"

Up came Neptune from the bottom of the sea, drawn by his wonderful horses.

He spoke to the winds in a stern voice.

"Back to your cave, you winds! How dare you come out without leave!"

At once they became quiet and flew back to their cave.

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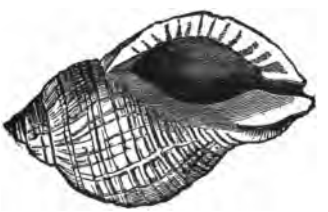
Neptune then helped Æneas and his sailors into their ships.

He showed them where a beautiful smooth harbor lay.

Then he jumped into his chariot. His horses plunged down into the waters, and carried him to his palace of pink sea-shells.



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PLUTO

How strange it would be to take a ride *down* through the earth!

Has anybody ever done so?

Yes, miners who dig out the coal which we burn.

Long ago people thought that if you rode down — down — all the way through the earth, you came to a place called Hades.

There the sun never shone; there was weeping and sorrow all the time.

Around it flowed the river Styx; the boatman, Charon, carried people across.

A strange monster guarded the gates.

This was Cerberus, — a fierce dog with three heads.

He was gentle to any one who went in. But growled at those who tried to get out.

The king of this dark country was named

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Pluto. He was the brother of the mighty Jupiter.

To him belonged all the treasures found in the earth.

The yellow gold, the shining quartz, the beds of coal, the mines of diamonds. But in spite of all this, he was sad and lonely.

He had no one to make his dark palace bright and happy.

At last he could stand it no longer.

So one day he called for his chariot with its four black horses. He drove up to the earth, and brought back Proserpine.

PROSERPINE

PROSERPINE was a dear little girl who liked nothing better than to play all day among the flowers.

Ceres, her mother, had charge of all the grain and fruit upon the earth.

One morning Ceres said to her little daughter:

"Now, my dear, I shall be away all day. I have to go to a distant place to make the crops grow.

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"Be a good little girl, and play with the gentle sea-nymphs upon the shore.

"But do not go into the water, and do not go alone into the woods."

For a long time Proserpine played with the sea-nymphs.

They brought her beautiful shells and corals from the sea.

Then she gathered wild roses and made garlands for them.

It seemed to her that the flowers had never been so beautiful before.

She filled her apron with them. But there was always a more beautiful flower just a step farther.

Then another step!—and another!—and, at last, she was in the forest.

She looked back, and saw the sea a long way off.

She felt afraid!

"I must run back," she whispered to herself, and turned to go.

But there, just at her feet, was a most strange and beautiful flower.

It had bright petals and a sweet smell.

"How lovely!" said Proserpine, "and how

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strange that I did not see it before! It must have just this minute opened!"

She stooped to pluck the beautiful flower.

As she did so she heard a rumbling noise like thunder.

The flower came up, roots and all.

Then the hole at her feet became larger and larger.

All at once, out of it came a chariot drawn by four coal-black horses.

In it sat King Pluto.

His face was pale and sad.

He shaded his eyes with his hand as if the light hurt them.

Before Proserpine could run away, Pluto caught her in his arms.

She screamed so loud that her mother, although far off, heard her.

Pluto's horses were swift as the wind.

In spite of the little girl's cries, he held her close.

After he had gone some miles, he struck the earth with his staff. It opened, and his horses plunged down into the dark hole.

On the way he tried to be kind to her, and make her forget her trouble.

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He pointed out the veins of gold, and the bright quartz crystals.

He showed her tons of diamonds, and told her that all these things should be hers.

But this did not make her happy. She thought only of her dear mother.

After a while they came to the river Lethe. Its waters were black and still.

Pluto told the child, that if she would drink a few drops of the water, she would forget her sorrow.

But Proserpine did not want to forget her mother, and cried harder than ever.

At last they reached the king's palace.

Dinner was set before them, but Proserpine would not taste it.

She knew that those who ate anything in Hades must stay there forever.

Every day after this some new and delicious dish was cooked for her, but all in vain.

For six long months Proserpine ate nothing.

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THE FINDING OF PROSERPINE

ALL this time Ceres had been looking for her little daughter.

She had hurried home when she heard Proserpine scream.

She had asked the sea-nymphs where their little playmate was.

But they could only tell her that she had gone to gather flowers.

Then she lighted a torch and searched in all the dark corners of the world.

She knocked at every door; she asked every one that she met.

But no one had seen Proserpine.

At last she thought of Apollo, who drives the sun-car every day through the heavens.

"Surely," she thought, "he can see all that happens in the world, and will tell me where my daughter is."

"Yes, Mother Ceres," said he when she asked him, "your little girl was gathering flowers, when King Pluto snatched her up. He has carried her down to his kingdom."

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Ceres was very angry.

She said that neither grain nor fruit should grow on the earth until Pluto gave back her daughter.

Then all the earth became brown and bare.

The cattle died; the birds hid themselves.

Men ploughed and sowed, but only thistles and brambles grew.

At last the people begged mighty Jupiter to help them.

He heard them, and sent his messenger, Mercury, to Hades to bring Proserpine back.

Now all this time Proserpine had eaten none of the dainties cooked for her in the palace of King Pluto.

The king was afraid that the little girl would starve.

So he sent a messenger to earth to bring down some fresh fruit.

But nothing was growing on the earth at this time, and all they could find was a poor withered pomegranate.

Proserpine was very fond of this fruit, and when she saw it, she put her little teeth in it and took one bite.

Alas! she swallowed six seeds.

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CERES

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At that very moment Mercury and Pluto came into the room.

"My dear," said Pluto, "here is Mercury, who has come to take you back to earth again.

"I shall be very lonely when you go. But, although I love you very much, I cannot be hard-hearted enough to keep you."

Now would you believe that Proserpine was sorry to leave King Pluto!

She had learned to love him a little.

So she promised to spend a month with him for every seed she had eaten.

The rest of the year she would spend with her mother.

Then Mercury took her hand and led her back to earth.

She would grow beautiful again.

As she walked, the earth grew green behind her and on either side of her.

Wherever she put her pretty foot there sprang up a flower.

The violets blossomed in her path.

The grain began to sprout.

The birds hopped about upon the trees, and sang with joy as she came.

Soon she was in her mother's arms.

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THE TWO SEEDS

LONG, long ago two seeds lay beside each other in the earth, waiting; it was cold and rather wearisome, and, to pass away the time, the one found means to speak to the other.

"What are you going to be?" said the one.

"I don't know," answered the other.

"As for me," replied the first, "I mean to be a rose. There is nothing like a splendid rose. Everybody will love me then."

"It's all right," whispered the second; and that was all it could say; for somehow when it had said that, it felt as if all the words in the world were used up. So they were silent again for a day or two.

"Oh, dear!" cried the first, "I have had some water. I never knew till it was inside me. I'm growing! I'm growing! good-by."

"Good-by," repeated the other, and lay still and waited more than ever.

The first grew and grew, pushing itself straight up, till at last it felt that it was in the open air; for it could breathe. And what a delicious breath it was! It was rather cold, but so refreshing.

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It could see nothing, for it was not quite a flower yet, only a plant. Plants never see till their eyes come, — that is, till they open their blossoms, — then they are flowers quite.

So it grew and grew, and kept its head up very steadily. It meant to see the sky the first thing, and leave the earth quite behind, as well as beneath it.

But, somehow or other, — though why it could not tell, — it felt very much inclined to cry.

At length it opened its eye. It was morning, and the sky was over its head. But, alas! it was no rose, — only a tiny white flower.

It felt yet more inclined to hang down its head and cry. But it still resisted, and tried hard to open its eye, and to hold its head upright, and to look full at the sky.

"I will be a Star of Bethlehem, at least," said the flower to itself.

But its heart felt very heavy, and a cold wind rushed over it, and bowed it down towards the earth. And the flower saw that the time of the singing of the birds was not come, that the snow covered the whole land, and that there was not a single flower in sight but itself.

And it half closed its leaves in terror and the

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dismay of loneliness. But that instant it remembered what the other seed used to say, and it said to itself, "It's all right; I will be what I can."

And thereon it yielded to the wind, drooped its head to the earth, and looked no more to the sky, but on the snow.

And straightway the wind stopped and the cold died away, and the snow sparkled like pearls and diamonds. The flower knew that it was the holding up of its head that hurt it so, and that its body came of snow, and that its name was snowdrop. And so it said once more, "It's all right," and waited in perfect peace. And the rest that it needed was to hang its head after its nature.

One day a pale, sad-looking girl, with thin face, large eyes, and long white hands, came along the snow where the flower grew, hanging her head like the snowdrop.

She spied it joyously, and said, "Ah, my little sister, have you come?"

She stooped and plucked the snowdrop. It trembled and died in her hand. This was a heavenly death for a snowdrop. For had it not cast a gleam of summer upon the heart of the sick girl.

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The other seed had a long time to wait. But it grew to be one of the loveliest roses ever seen. And at last it had the highest honor ever granted to a flower — and what was that, do you think?

— *From* GEORGE MACDONALD'S "*David Elginbrod.*"

THE TREES IN MARCH

THE trees are leafless now. If you wish to know how beautiful they are, copy them on paper.

They are asleep; but look at the ends of their branches! There are the buds that give the promise of awakening.

Nay, here is something awake.

Dangling from the alder are the catkins.

These are sometimes called pussy's tails and lamb's tails.

The leaves have not yet come out, it is true. But the blossoms are sheltered in the catkin.

Look at the tails hanging in twos and threes! The whole tree looks yellow.

Only a little while ago, and they, too, were shut up tight in the bud.

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The dust of the pollen on a sunny day comes powdering those who gather them.

—*Adapted from* CHARLOTTE M. YONGE'S "*An Old Woman's Outlook.*"

TO DAFFODILS

FAIR Daffodills, we weep to see
You haste away so soon;
As yet the early rising sun
Has not attain'd his noon.
Stay, stay,
Until the hasting day
Has run
But to the even song;

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And, having pray'd together, we
Will go with you along.

We have short time to stay as you,
We have as short a spring;
As quick a growth to meet decay,
As you, or any thing.
We die,
As your hours do, and dry
Away
Like to the summer's rain,
Or as the pearls of morning's dew,
Ne'r to be found again.

— ROBERT HERRICK.

THE EARTHWORM

THE common earthworm is a very strange animal. It was a water animal, but has come at last to live under the earth.

He breathes as the leech does.

He must therefore have moisture. Perfectly dry air is of no use to him. And he dies very quickly in dry places.

Eyes would be of no use to him in his under-

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ground journeys. And he only comes above ground at night.

Suckers, too, would hinder instead of helping him. His body ends in a fine point that he can push into the earth like a shoemaker's awl.

But how is he to force his way through the earth?

Pass your hand along his body from the tail to the head. You will feel that almost every ring has bristles on the lower side, all pointing backwards. This helps him greatly both in walking and going through the earth.

He eats the earth through which he passes. His long upper lip shovels it into himself. Then he sends it out at the tail. These are the strange "castings" which we can find on the ground now.

The young earthworms are hatched underground in cocoons made of earth and slime.

They have neither eyes nor suckers, and at once become fearless miners.

"The early bird catches the worm," but even the early bird is not likely to catch the whole worm.

He often nips off his tail just as the worm is disappearing into his burrow.

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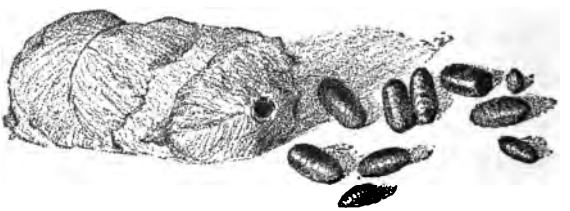
But the worm can grow his tail again, so that not much harm is done.

All day long he lies safe in his burrow. At night he does his work and takes his walk abroad.

— *Adapted from* ARABELLA BUCKLEY'S "*Life and Her Children.*"

COCOONS



THIS is the cocoon of the lovely polyphemus moth. See how snugly the leaves have been tucked around it. Tear them away. Underneath you will find a yellowish, oval, silken case. Inside of this the pupa is stowed away.

The caterpillar that made this cocoon was the large, thick, green animal that we found in the fall.

All during the summer it was busy feeding. But there were times when it did not eat at all.

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Late in a summer afternoon you might have seen it shedding its skin.

As the caterpillar grows, the outer skin tightens and hardens. Since it cannot stretch any more, and since the creature must grow while it eats, the only thing to be done is to get rid of it. Therefore Dame Nature, like a careful nurse, strips the young polyphemus and puts him to bed.

In between times it resumes the serious duty of life — eating.

A full-grown caterpillar has consumed not less than one hundred and twenty oak leaves.

One day in the fall the caterpillar refused to eat. Its first step towards making a cocoon was to wrap the stem and lash it to the twig above. Then it drew around it the neighboring leaves.

Within this little cell it began to spin.

Finally the silken case was complete. And in it the caterpillar has been sleeping all winter long.

— *Adapted from* DR. HENRY C. MCCOOK'S "*Tenants of an Old Farm.*"

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ROBIN REDBREAST

VERY early was the little Indian boy taught to be brave and to endure.

When he was eleven years old, he had to leave his father's wigwam. He had to go and live in the forest by himself.

Here he stayed for seven days. During all that time he did not eat even a corn cake. He did not take a drink of cool water from the stream.

He must not cry, no matter how much he suffered. He must be patient and silent.

Then there would come to the poor little fellow a Great Spirit.

He would touch the boy and promise him that he would become a great warrior.

He would give him, too, a new name.

* * * * * * *

Once there was a great chief who had an only son.

The child was not strong, but he was so gentle and good that every one loved him.

When he was eleven years old, the poor little boy was sent to the forest.

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His mother wept when she took leave of him. She felt that she would never again see her darling.

His father, too, was sad at heart.

But the stern old chief felt that he must teach his son to be brave. He hoped that, in time, he might become head of the tribe.

So he made him a little tent of birch logs.

And he spread on the floor a mat of reeds.

Then the little boy lay down and closed his eyes, and his father went away.

After a few days the great chief came back and saw his little son, pale and thin.

"Father, take me back," said he. "Take me back, or I shall die.

"I do not want to be a great warrior. I want to love people, not to kill them."

But the chief said, "Be patient, my son. In two more days I shall come for you again.

"Then I shall bring you food, and take you home to your mother."

On the seventh day he came and looked in the tent, and found it empty.

But on the roof sat a robin with a bright red breast, and sang this song:

"Great Chief, I was once your son. I shall

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always live near you, and love your people. I shall sing them this song: —

Chief, listen, Chief!
Be more gentle; be more loving
Chief, teach it, Chief;
Be not fierce, oh, be not cruel;
Love each other!
Love each other!"

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APRIL

'Tis the noon of the springtime,
  Yet never a bird
In the wind-shaken elm
  Or the maple is heard;
For green meadow grasses,
  Wide levels of snow,
And blowing of drifts
  Where crocus should blow.

—*From* JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER'S "*April.*"

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SPRING

THE alder by the river
Shakes out her powdery curls;
The willow buds in silver
For little boys and girls.

The little birds fly over,
And oh, how sweet they sing!
To tell the happy children
That once again 'tis spring.

The gay green grass comes creeping
So soft beneath their feet;
The frogs begin to ripple
A music clear and sweet.

And butterflies are coming
And scarlet columbine,
And in the sunny meadows
The dandelions shine.

And just as many daisies
As their soft hands can hold,
The little ones may gather,
All fair in white and gold.

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Here blows the warm red clover,
  There peeps the violet blue;
O happy little children!
  God made them all for you.

— CELIA THAXTER.

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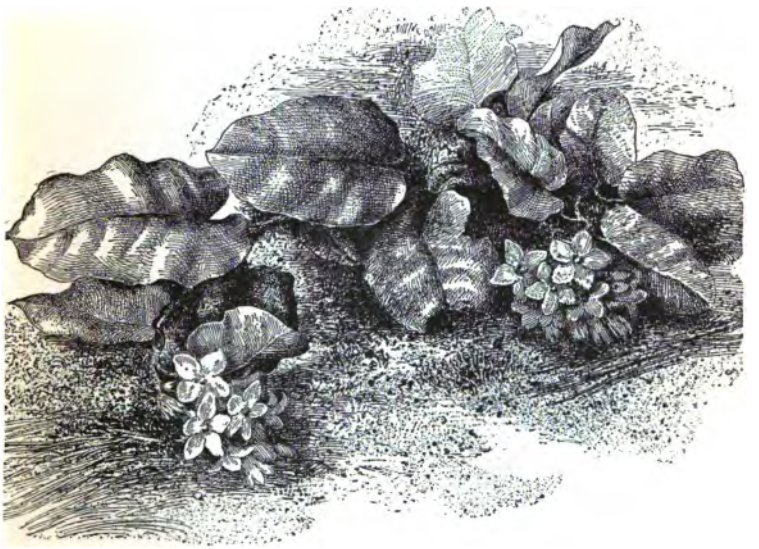
PLANTS

ARBUTUS



"The trailing Spring flower, tinted like a shell,
Amid dry leaves and mosses."

—WHITTIER.

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HEPATICA

"Out burst the merry bright sun, like gold;
And a robin sang out so blithe and bold,
And little Hepatica laughed in glee,
'Why, it's spring, I declare, it's spring,' said she."

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THE LEGEND OF THE SPRING BEAUTY

An old man was sitting alone in his hut by the side of a frozen stream.

It was near the end of winter, and his fire was almost out. There was just a little spark among the white ashes.

He was very old. His hair was white, and he trembled in every joint.

He lived alone. Day after day passed, and he heard nothing but the North wind sweeping before it the new fallen snow.

One day, a handsome young man walked with a light step up the frozen path leading to the door.

His cheeks were red, his eyes were bright, and a smile played upon his lips.

He wore on his head a wreath of sweet grass. He carried a bunch of flowers in his hand.

The old man had been alone so long, that he was glad to have a visitor.

"Ah! my son," he said in his shrill old voice, "I am glad to see you. Come in, come in. Let us pass the night together."

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He then took out a curious old pipe. He filled it with tobacco, and handed it to his guest.

That was his way of making him welcome.

After giving another touch to the fire, for he did not want it to go out, they sat down to talk.

Then the old man began to boast of what great things he had done in his days.

"I blow my breath, and the streams stand still," said he. "The waters become hard as stone."

"I breathe," said the young man, "and flowers spring up all over the plain."

"I shake my locks," said the old man, "and snow covers the land. The leaves fall from the trees at my bidding. The birds fly away, and all the other animals hide themselves in the ground."

"I shake my curls," said the young man, "and warm showers of soft rain fall upon the earth, like the eyes of children shining with delight. My voice brings back the birds. My warm breath unlocks the streams."

So the night passed. As the young man talked, the old man grew silent.

For a long time he had not spoken.

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The young man, still smiling, dozed in his chair.

At length the sun began to rise. A gentle warmth came over the place.

The stream began to murmur by the door.

The sweet smell of growing grass and flowers came upon the breeze.

A robin and a bluebird settled on the roof of the hut and began to sing.

The young man opened his eyes. He looked upon the face of the old man, now cold and stiff in death.

As he looked the old man grew smaller and smaller, and, at last, melted away.

And where the fire had been was a small white flower with a pink border.

The young man touched it lightly with his fingers and went on his way.

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FLOWER in the crannied wall,
I pluck you out of the crannies;
Hold you here, root and all,
In my hand.

Little flower, but if I could understand
What you are, root and all,
And all in all,
I should know what God and man is.

—ALFRED TENNYSON.

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CALLING THE VIOLET

Dear little Violet,
Don't be afraid!
Lift your blue eyes
From the rock's mossy shade!
All the birds call for you
Out of the sky:
May is here waiting,
And here, too, am I.

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Why do you shiver so,
Violet sweet?
Soft is the meadow-grass
Under my feet.
Wrapped in your hood of green,
Violet, why
Peep from your earth-door,
So silent and shy?

Trickle the little brooks
Close to your bed;
Softest of fleecy clouds
Float overhead;
"Ready and waiting!"
The slender reeds sigh
"Ready and waiting!"
We sing — May and I.

Come, pretty Violet,
Winter's away:
Come, for without you
May isn't May.
Down through the sunshine
Wings fluttered and fly; —
Quick, little Violet,
Open your eye!

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Hear the rain whisper,
"Dear Violet, come!"
How can you stay
In your underground home?
Up in the pine boughs
For you the winds sigh,
Homesick to see you
Are we — May and I.

Ha! though you care not
For call or for shout,
Yon troops of sunbeams
Are winning you out;
Now all is beautiful
Under the sky;
May's here, — and violets!
Winter, good-bye.

— Lucy Larcom.

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BAUCIS AND PHILEMON

MERCURY went on many errands for the gods. He became a great traveller, and visited every part of the earth.

Sometimes there was nothing to do. Sometimes he might just as well have stayed at home in Olympus. But even then he often made little trips of seven and eight thousand miles for the fun of it.

He thought no more of that than you would think of taking a ride on the trolly.

Many strange things happened on these occasions. But the story I am going to tell you now is, perhaps, the strangest of all.

This time Mercury begged his father to go with him.

Jupiter agreed to go, as it was vacation time for him.

"But," said Jupiter, "let us dress ourselves like men. We will not let the people know that we are gods. I want to see how men act when they think the gods are not looking on."

That very day, toward the close of the after-

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noon, two poor travellers came to a little village in Greece.

They must have walked a long distance, for they were grimy with the dust of the road. One was tall and grave and stern. The other was young, and his eyes were bright and twinkling with fun.

They knocked at the door of one house after another. They asked for something to eat, and a place to sleep.

But, because they were poor and could not pay, they were driven away.

For the people in this place were not good to the poor.

If they had known that the tired-looking travellers were rich men or powerful gods, they would have gladly welcomed them.

Some of them even set their dogs on the tramps, as they thought them. Many of the wicked boys threw stones at them.

After a while they came to a poor little cottage. Here lived an old man named Philemon, and his wife Baucis.

Here they were taken in by this tender-hearted old couple.

Philemon talked to them. He told them

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how sorry he was that they had been so badly treated by the neighbors. Meanwhile the good old woman laid the table for supper.

She spread the cloth. She put on the table some brown bread and cheese, and a little honey. For each one, there was a bunch of grapes.

From the spring in which it had been put to cool she brought some milk in a brown earthen pitcher, and filled their bowls.

Then they sat down to the meal.

The young man drank his milk in one draught. He held out his bowl for more.

Poor old Baucis, very much ashamed, said she was afraid there was no more.

"But look and see," said the young man, "perhaps it is not so bad as you think."

The old woman lifted the pitcher. There it was, full of delicious milk. It was much richer than that which her poor cow gave. In this strange way it was filled again and again.

And, as the guests ate, the purple grapes seemed to swell and grow luscious. The stale end of the loaf, which was all that old Baucis could give them, grew into a white loaf just fresh from the oven!

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The old people were frightened at this strange thing, but kept silent.

After the travellers had finished their supper, Baucis lighted a candle. She led the way to her own little room where they were to sleep.

She and her husband lay down on the floor and talked in whispers of their strange guests.

In the morning the old people were up early, and the travellers, too, soon came down.

Philemon and Baucis begged them to stay a little longer. But they said that they had far to go, and must go at once.

So all four started out together. For the old man and his wife had the kind thought to walk a little way with their guests.

As they were mounting the hill which overlooked the town, the elder traveller spoke of the hard hearts of the people, who had driven him from their doors.

"They forget," said he, "that we are all brothers, and that we should all help each other."

As he spoke he frowned. At the same moment the sky darkened and distant thunder was heard.

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The old woman was afraid of the coming storm. She looked back to see if she had closed the lattice window of her cottage.

But wonderful to tell! What do you think she saw?

The village was nowhere to be seen! The valley in which it lay was filled up with a great blue lake. All the houses and people were buried in its waters!

"Oh! the poor people!" cried Baucis.

"Do not pity them," said Jupiter, who now showed himself in his true shape to the two kind-hearted old people.

"They were hard and cruel to the poor, and to strangers. They did not deserve to live as men and women. Let them live as fishes in the cold waters of the lake."

"But you," he said to Philemon and Baucis, "you have shared all that you had with us. Now, ask me whatever you want, and I will grant it."

The old man and woman looked at one another. Then said, "Let us live together while we live. And let us die at the same moment, for we have always loved each other!"

"Be it so!" said Jupiter.

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Then, pointing toward their cottage, he said, "There is your home."

What was their surprise to see, instead of their poor little cottage, a beautiful palace of white marble.

They turned to thank the gods, but neither Jupiter nor Mercury were there.

For many years the old folks lived in the palace, and made everybody happy who passed that way.

The brown pitcher was always full of milk when it was wanted.

One summer morning the old folks were not to be found. But there in front of the door of their palace were two beautiful trees. Their roots deep down in the ground, and their branches touching each other lovingly.

One was an oak tree and the other was a linden.

As the breeze rustled through their leaves they seemed to say: —

"I am Philemon." "I am Baucis."

In after years, many times a dusty, tired traveller was glad to sit under the shade of these beautiful trees.

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THE OAK TREE

THE oak tree was an acorn once,
And fell upon the earth;
And sun and showers nourished it,
And gave the oak tree birth.
The little sprouting oak tree!
Two leaves it had at first,
Till sun and showers had nourished it,
Then out the branches burst.

The little sapling oak tree!
Its root was like a thread,

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Till the kindly earth had nourished it,
Then out it freely spread.
On this side and on that side,
It grappled with the ground,
And in the ancient, rifted rock
Its firmest footing found.

Then sing for the oak tree,
The monarch of the wood;
Sing for the oak tree,
That groweth green and good;
That groweth broad and branching
Within the forest shade;
That groweth now, and yet shall grow
When we are lowly laid.

—MARY HOWITT.

THE OAK

DID you ever tie a string around an acorn, and let it hang in a bottle of water? You may watch its roots push out below. Then its young leaves sprout above. Now you must set it in a pot of soil. You may watch it grow until it is too big for the pot. This is the time to plant it in the garden.

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An acorn will not grow into a new tree under the shadow of the old one. It needs plenty of room and light. But how can it get away where it can have these?

Have you ever found a little pile of acorns in the woods that the squirrel had collected for its winter stores? This is one way that the acorns are scattered.

Birds, too, are fond of them. Sometimes they let them fall when they are carrying them off.

In England, the rooks have been seen to work out a hole in the ground with their beaks. Then in they would pop an acorn, covering it up with moss and earth. In this way they sometimes sow quite a grove of oak trees.

Does the rook know that it is planting a tree? Or is it only hiding its food?

Oak trees will grow in almost any kind of soil. But they like that best into which they can send their deep roots down a long way.

They must spread their roots, too, for the mighty branches with their hundreds of leaves, flowers, and acorns need a great deal of support.

Cold wet places, and the borders of ponds and marshes. they do not like at all.

The oak does not begin to bear acorns until it

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is about eighteen years old. But the oak has no need to hurry. He has so many years to live, and so much time for all of his work. If he is happy and healthy he may live to be nine hundred years, or even more.

* * * * * * *

Like an old man, the old oak is usually bald. Some of the upper branches are bare. They stand out like great horns against the sky, as if a giant stag were hiding below.

No wonder it looks worn and beaten. It has stood against many storms and tempests.

The inside of the huge trunk is now quite hollow and decayed. But outside it is more beautiful than ever. Soft mosses creep lovingly over it. They try to hide the bare place.

How is it that a tree can live on for years after it is hollow and decayed? And yet if you should peel a ring from its bark it would kill it. This is because the living ring is always just inside the bark. If the bark is removed the growing cells dry up. When a ring of bark is taken off, the ring of living cells below is killed. The food which the roots drink up cannot rise to the tree-top to feed the leaves or the flowers or the fruit. And so the tree dies.

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Oak wood is very hard and close and firm. Every year it grows more valuable.

There is an old English rhyme which goes:—

"Hearts of oak are our ships,
Hearts of oak are our men."

Our country needs "hearts of oak" too. Surely some of the spirit of the old oak will breathe into you. And America will never be without true hearts of oak boys and girls, men and women, too, strong and brave to endure storm and tempest; steady and patient to do good work that will last for ages; generous and ready ever to give shelter and support to the weak.

—*From* MRS. DYSON'S "*Stories of the Trees.*"

THE STORY OF THE POPLAR

AN old man once found the pot of gold that lies at the foot of the rainbow. He put it under his cloak. Then he started home through the forest.

When the dry twigs and leaves crackled under his feet, he was frightened.

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He was afraid that somebody was following him.

But no one saw him; not even the trees.

They were all asleep.

At last he was so tired that he could carry it no farther.

So he hid it among the thick branches of the Poplar tree.

Then he hurried home, meaning to come back in the morning early and get it.

But very soon Iris found out that her treasure was gone.

"Somebody has stolen the pot of gold that lies at the foot of the rainbow!" she cried aloud.

"Who has it? Who has it?"

Her cries wakened the trees.

"Not I," said the Maple.

"Not I," said the Oak.

"Nor I," said the Poplar.

And so answered the Chestnut and the Beech, and all the other trees.

Then Iris ran to Father Jupiter, and told him of her loss.

He looked out from Olympus, and called to the trees: —

"Hold up your arms!"

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Up went all the branches, pointing to the sky.

But alas! when the Poplar held up its branches, down fell the pot of gold.

Now this noble tree felt very much ashamed, for it was an honest tree.

"Forgive me, Father Jupiter," it cried, "the thief must have hidden it here while I slept."

"After this, I shall forever hold up my arms, to show that nothing is hidden in them."

And true enough, there the Poplar stands ever since, as you see it in the picture.

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THE TREE

THE Tree's early leaf buds were bursting their brown;
"Shall I take them away?" said the Frost, sweeping down.
"No, leave them alone
Till the blossoms have grown,"
Prayed the Tree, while he trembled from rootlet to crown.

The Tree bore his blossoms, and all the birds sung;
"Shall I take them away?" said the wind as he swung.
"No, leave them alone
Till the berries have grown,"
Said the Tree, while his leaflets quivering hung.

The Tree bore his fruit in the midsummer glow;
Said the girl, "May I gather thy berries now?"
"Yes, all thou canst see;
Take them; all are for thee,"
Said the Tree, while he bent down his laden boughs low.

— BJORNSTJERNE BJORNSON.

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SWALLOW

"WHAT tidings hath the Swallow heard
That bids her leave the lands of Summer,
For woods and fields where April yields
Bleak welcome to the blithe newcomer?"

* * * * * *

"She is here, she is here, the Swallow,
Fair seasons bringing, fair years to follow."

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WOOD PEWEE

"A LITTLE bird, in suit
Of sombre olive, soft and brown,
Perched in the maple branches, mute;
With greenish gold its vest was fringed,
Its tiny cap was ebon-tinged,
With ivory pale its wings were barred,
And its dark eyes were tender starred —
'Dear bird,' I said, 'what is thy name?'
And thrice the mournful answer came,
So faint and far, and yet so near, —
'Pewee! pe-wee! peer!'"

—J. T. TROWBRIDGE.

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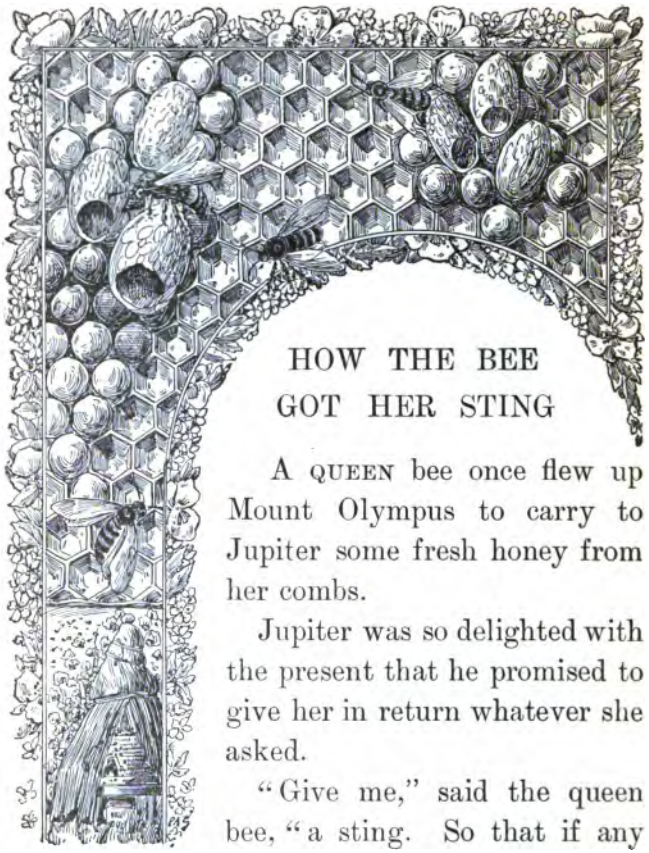

HOW THE BEE GOT HER STING

A QUEEN bee once flew up Mount Olympus to carry to Jupiter some fresh honey from her combs.

Jupiter was so delighted with the present that he promised to give her in return whatever she asked.

"Give me," said the queen bee, "a sting. So that if any other queen tries to take my people from me, I may kill her. Give me, also, a sting for each of my bees. So that if a mortal attempts to steal honey from my hive, they, too, may die."

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Jupiter was much displeased, for he loved the race of man. But he had to keep his promise.

"You and your people shall have a sting," he said. "But if you use it, it shall remain in the wound that you make. And you shall die from the loss of it."

CATCH

Buzz, quoth the blue fly,
Hum, quoth the bee;
Buzz and hum they cry,
And so do we!

—Ben Jonson.

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MAY

I FEEL a newer life in every gale;
The winds that fan the flowers,
And with their welcome breathings fill the sail,
Tell of serener hours, —
Of hours that glide unfelt away
Beneath the sky of May.

— JAMES G. PERCIVAL.

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MAY

THERE is but one May in the year,
And sometimes May is wet and cold;
There is but one May in the year
Before the year grows old.

Yet though it be the chilliest May,
With least of sun and most of showers,
Its wind and dew, its night and day,
Bring up the flowers.

— CHRISTINA G. ROSSETTI.

MAY IN ENGLAND

OF all others, be the weather what it will, May is the month of singing birds.

The larks are quivering and shouting high up in the sky long before sunrise.

The thrushes and blackbirds take up the strain. The nightingale stops for an hour or two. But he begins again after his breakfast.

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The whole air is full of twitterings, chirpings, and songs.

The turtle dove groans. The wood pigeon invites Taffy. "Take *two* cows, Taffy! Taffy, take *two*," she says. The tame pigeon mourns on our roofs. And the African dove coo-*roos*, bows, and laughs in our cages.

Each has its own voice. The turtle dove is a small creature. It keeps in pairs, not in flocks. It builds, in low bushes, the usual untidy nest of the dove kind.

The wood pigeon is the ring dove proper. For it has a conspicuous white collar on its gray. There are not enough of them to do much mischief. Still the farmer does not like them, and with good reason.

— *From* CHARLOTTE M. YONGE'S "*An Old Woman's Outlook.*"

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TOADSTOOL

"A TOADSTOOL comes up in a night, —
Learn the lesson, little folk: —
An oak grows on a hundred years,
But then it is an oak."

— CHRISTINA G. ROSSETTI.

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You may laugh and blush and smile,
And perfume the air a while.
But, sweet things, you must be gone;
Fruit, you know, is coming on.

—ROBERT HERRICK.

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APOLLO AND DAPHNE

CUPID was a pretty merry boy who could shoot an arrow as well as Apollo.

But his arrows did not kill.

He had two kinds: one was gold and sharp-pointed, and this made people love.

The other was of lead and blunt-pointed, and this made people hate.

Apollo saw the little fellow one day, playing with his bow and arrow.

"What are you doing with such weapons, saucy boy?" he said.

"Leave the bow and arrow to me, and play with your torch."

Cupid was a very hot-tempered little god. He talked back to Apollo, like the saucy little boy he was.

"I am greater than you," he said, "for you can shoot everything else with your arrow, but *I* can shoot *you* with mine."

Then he ran away. After that day he watched for a good shot at Apollo.

Now one day, Apollo was taking a walk on the bank of the river Peneus.

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All at once there came in sight a beautiful nymph, named Daphne.

She was the daughter of the river, and lived in a cave under the cliffs.

Now the mischievous little Cupid was watching from the top of a hill.

He quickly took a golden arrow, and shot it into the heart of Apollo.

Then he shot a leaden arrow into the heart of Daphne.

Apollo raised his eyes and saw the pretty nymph, picking her way over the stones in the river.

Her little bare feet were as pink as sea-shells.

Her eyes were as bright as stars.

Her hair hung loose on her shoulders.

"Oh! pretty maid," said Apollo, "come and live with me in my palace in the sky."

Daphne ran away in fright, but Apollo followed her.

"Do not be afraid," he said. "I shall not hurt you. I am Apollo, the son of the mighty Jupiter."

But Daphne ran faster and faster.

"Do not run so fast on these rough stones," called Apollo, "they will hurt your pretty feet."

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APOLLO AND DAPHNE

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But still she hurried on.

She was at last out of breath, and able to run no farther.

Apollo was just behind, and put out his hand to seize her.

"Father Peneus, save me! save me!" she called.

The river-god heard her, and all at once her feet were fastened into the soil, and became roots.

Her body was covered with the thin bark of a young tree.

Her arms became branches; and her beautiful hair became the leaves of the laurel tree.

Apollo was very sad at losing the beautiful nymph.

He gathered some of the leaves and made a wreath.

"You shall always be my tree," he said.

"I shall wear you for my crown.

"Your leaves shall be always green, and great heroes shall be crowned with them."

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DANDELION FASHIONS

HERE and there, every where,
Where the sun is, where the shade is,
Fresh and sweet, on tilting feet,
Stand the dandelion ladies,
Gaudy-gay, in spring array,
Scores of dandelion ladies.

Green ruffs deck each slender neck,
Every head has perched upon it,
Saucy, jaunty, made to flaunt,
A little yellow satin bonnet.
What a place for a pretty face,
In a yellow satin bonnet.

This the style for a little while,
Then, despite the time or weather,
All unite on a bonnet white,
White and snowy as a feather,
Puffy, fleecy, moonshine breezy,
Thistle-fashioned crest of feather.

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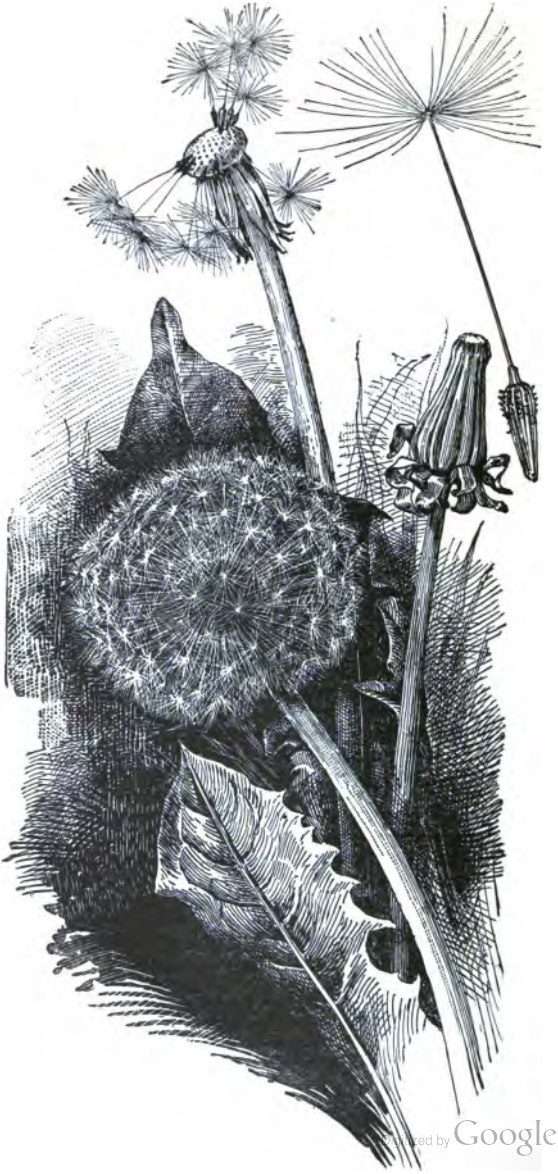

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Here and there, every where,
Where the sun is, where the shade is,
Satin crown gives place to down,
Fickle dandelion ladies.
Blows the wind, and who can find
One of the dandelion ladies?

—CLARA DOTY BATES.

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THE DANDELION

I REMEMBER in my school days the boys and girls were fond of playing at what they called "making pictures." They would pick a double daffodil or a double red daisy.[1] Then they would put a piece of glass over the specimen and cover the whole with white paper. In the front they cut out a square flap of paper. When they opened this little wonder, you saw a tiny picture of the daisy or the daffodil through the glass.

It seemed to look much prettier in this peep show than growing in the garden border.

We gladly paid a pin or a button to get a look at it.

Now I want to treat the dandelion in the same way. I want to show you what strange and beautiful things there are in it. And I hope that you will not say that this sight was not worth a pin!

I want to make a picture of the dandelion, and teach you what Lowell calls "the secret of a weed's plain heart."

[1] The English daisy is a small button-shaped flower, its flowerets tipped with pink.

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The golden head of the dandelion is not a single flower. It is what is called a composite flower, made up of a great many little flowers.

Each of these separate flowers is as perfect as if there were only one.

It has all the parts for making seeds just as you see in the rose and lily.

The dandelion has so many flowers in one head that it may look bright and showy. This it does to attract the insects.

The insects feed on its honey. In return they carry the pollen from one flower to another. This makes the best and most seed.

* * * * * * *

When the sun is shining the dandelions look like little suns themselves. This is the time when the bees visit them.

But when it rains, or evening comes, then the dandelion shuts up its flowers. They do not wish to have their honey washed away by the rain or the dew.

The dandelion usually opens between six and seven in the morning and closes about the same time in the evening.

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You have noticed that after a while the flowers of the dandelion disappear.

Their stalks lower themselves and lie close to the ground for about twelve days.

When the seeds are ripe they rise up straight again. In place of the golden blossoms, you see fluffy balls.

The poet might say that the sun of the golden blossoms had set. And the pale round moon of the feathery seeds comes to its place.

You have often, I am sure, gathered the dandelions, and blown away the downy seeds. Those that are left tell you the time of day.

> "Dandelion, with globe of down,
> The schoolboy's clock in every town."

The stem and leaves are full of a bitter milky juice. This keeps most animals from eating them. Then, too, there is its thick long root. It goes so far into the ground, and takes such a firm hold, that it is hard to pull up.

All of these facts are surely remarkable proofs of God's care for this weed and of its importance in His eyes. They should teach us to value it, too.

— *From* HUGH MACMILLAN'S "*The Clock of Nature.*"

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REINDEER MOSS

EVERY one knows that the reindeer moss feeds that animal during the long winters of the cold north.

But every one does not know that reindeer moss is found in our own country. It may be found in tufts and even in carpets in open woods.

Pieces of it held to the light look like small grayish white leafless trees.

In Arctic regions it completely covers the ground with its snowy tufts. It is as valuable to the Laplander as grass is to us.

If the forests are burned to the ground, this plant reappears, and soon grows as well as ever.

On Arctic plains herds of reindeers are happy and well fed. But the horse, the camel, or the elephant would die there of hunger.

This plant is also used for winter fodder. At the end of September it is scraped with large iron rakes into heaps. These are marked by tall poles.

Just as soon as the snow comes these

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heaps are carried down to the farms on sledges.

Reindeer moss is also used for stuffing pillows and mattresses.

Out of it, too, "famine bread" is made. This is composed of sawdust, oatmeal, and reindeer moss, — all pounded together.

— *Adapted from* HUGH MACMILLAN'S "*First Forms of Vegetation.*"

THE CATERPILLAR

BROWN and furry
Caterpillar, in a hurry
Take your walk
To the shady leaf, or stalk,
Or what not,
Which may be the chosen spot.

No toad spy you,
Hovering bird of prey pass by you;
Spin and die,
To live again,
A butterfly.

— CHRISTINA G. ROSSETTI.

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ALL THE BIRDS HAVE COME AGAIN

ALL the birds have come again,
Come with joyous singing.
Through the meadow and the wood,
Hear their voices ringing.
Robin, bluebird, thrush and all,—
Listen to their merry call!
Pleasant spring-time's happy days
Joy and life are bringing.

See how gayly one and all
To and fro are springing.
Little nests you soon will spy,
To the branches clinging,
As their chirping meets my ear,
All their singing, sweet and clear,
Pleasant spring-time's happy days
Joy and life are bringing.

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BOBOLINK

"EVERY one's a funny fellow, every one's a little mellow;
Follow, follow, follow, follow, o'er the hill and in the hollow

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Merrily, merrily, there they lie; now they rise and now they fly.
They cross and turn, and in and out, and down the middle, and wheel about,
With a 'Phew, shew, Wadolincon! Listen to me, Bobolincon!
Happy's the wooing that's speedily doing, that's speedily doing,
That's merry and over with the bloom of the clover.
Bobolincon, Wadolincon, Winterseeble, follow, follow me!'"

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SUMMER STORIES AND SONGS

SUMMER

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JUNE

And June
Must follow soon;
Stay, June, stay! —
If only we could stop the moon
And June!

— Christina G. Rossetti.

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CUMULUS, OR WOOLPACK CLOUDS

"Beautiful cloud! with folds so soft and fair,
Swimming in the pure and quiet air."

STRATUS, OR LAYER CLOUDS

"Little white cloudlets up in the sky,
Say, are you snowy ships, sailing on high?
Or are you downy sheep, running to find
Shelter away from the rude blowing wind?"

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SIGNS OF RAIN

"THE hollow winds begin to blow,
The clouds look black, the glass is low,
The soot falls down, the spaniels sleep,
And spiders from their cobwebs creep.
Last night the sun went pale to bed,
The moon in halos hid her head;
The boding shepherd heaves a sigh,
For see, a rainbow spans the sky!
The walls are damp, the ditches smell,
Closed is the pink-eyed pimpernel;
Hark, how the chairs and tables crack;
Old Betty's joints are on the rack.
Loud quack the ducks, the peacocks cry;
The distant hills are looking nigh.
How restless are the snorting swine —
The busy flies disturb the kine.
Low o'er the grass the swallow wings;
The cricket, too, how loud it sings.
Puss on the hearth, with velvet paws,
Sits smoothing o'er her whiskered jaws.

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Through the clear stream the fishes rise,
And nimbly catch the incautious flies.
The sheep were seen at early light
Cropping the meads with eager bite.
Though June, the air is cold and chill;
The mellow blackbird's voice is still.
The glow-worms, numerous and bright,
Illumed the dewy dell last night.
At dusk the squalid toad was seen
Hopping, crawling o'er the green.
The frog has lost his yellow vest
And in a dingy suit is dressed.
The disturbed toad is newly risen
Quite to the summit of his prison.
The whirling wind the dust obeys
And in the rapid eddy plays.
My dog, so altered is his taste,
Quits mutton bones on grass to feast.
And see! yon rooks, how odd their flight;
They imitate the gliding kite,
Or seem precipitate to fall,
As if they felt the piercing ball.
'Twill surely rain, I see with sorrow;
Our jaunt must be put off to-morrow."

— DR. JENNER, *the discoverer of vaccination.*

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HOW SUMMER CAME UPON EARTH

THE Indians say that there was once a time when it was winter all the year round.

Cold north winds blew, and snow and hail fell every month.

There was no Spring, with its buds and tender young leaves. There was no Summer, with its long, warm, dreamy days. Nor had any man ever seen the bright red and yellow dress of the forests in Autumn.

There was a good spirit named Manitou, who was a fisher.

He called all the animals to meet and make a plan by which the earth could have some warm weather.

They thought that the best way would be to leap up and make a hole in the sky. So that they could get some of the heat and warmth of heaven.

The otter was the first to try. "That is not hard to do," he said, as he grinned. "I can easily jump as high as that."

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But he soon changed his mind. For he fell headlong through the air down to the earth. He hurt himself so badly that he was hardly able to move.

Then the beaver, and the lynx, and the badger, each tried in turn.

At last a wolf took such a leap that he made a dent in the sky. Then he took another, and almost went through.

"Take me with you this time," said the fisher, "for I am sure we shall get in."

So, with the fisher on his back, he made a third leap. This time they made a great hole in the sky, and crept up on the inside.

Here they found a broad, smooth, shiny place, with here and there beautiful wigwams.

The people who lived in these wigwams were not at home.

But there were beautiful singing birds in cages, hanging at the door.

"These will delight my little boy," thought the fisher. He began to open the cages, one by one.

The birds took flight through the opening in the sky, and came down to the earth.

What do you think they were?

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They were nothing less than Spring, Summer, and Autumn.

Now the people in the wigwams were not far away, and when they saw the birds flying out, they ran home.

They were just in time to make a grab for Summer bird as she was flying through the hole.

She got away, but they hurt her so that she has been sickly ever since.

Then they turned on the wolf and the fisher.

The wolf slipped through the hole, and got safely back to earth.

But the fisher ran north. He was closely followed by the angry people, who shot their arrows at him.

At last he was wounded. He stretched himself across the part of the sky where he was to die.

There he can still be seen on starry nights.

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RED TOP AND TIMOTHY

Red Top and Timothy
Come here in the spring;
Light spears out of emerald
sheaths,
Everywhere they spring:
Harmless little soldiers,
On the fields they play;
Nodding plumes and crossing
blades,
All the livelong day.

Red Top and Timothy
Bring their music band,
Some with scarlet epaulets,
Strutting stiff and grand;
Some in sky-blue jackets,
Some in vests of pink,
Black and white their leader's coat,
Restless bobolink.

Red Top's airy feathers
Tremble to his notes,

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In themselves an orchestra ;
Then a thousand throats
Set the woods a-laughing,
While the saucy thing,
Anywhere on spike or spear,
Sways himself to swing.

Timothy and Red Top
Will return again,
With familiar songs and flowers,
Through the April rain ;
Though their giant foeman
Will not let them be,
One who swings a keener scythe
Cuts down such as he.

— LUCY LARCOM.

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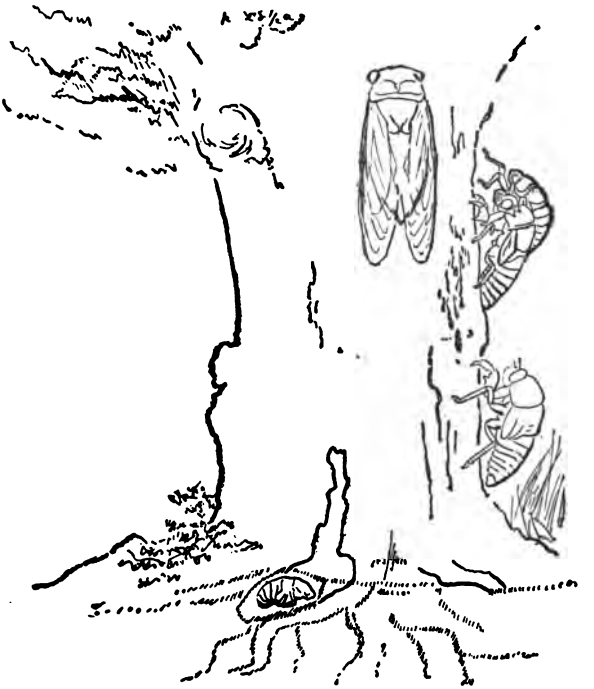
THE CICADA



THE cicadas enjoy but a few days in the winged state. But they have a remarkable length of life in their wingless and grub-like form. One kind lives seventeen years in the ground.

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Let us trace their history from the laying of the eggs until the coming out of the winged form.

When the time has come for the mother to lay her eggs, she selects a position near the tip of a twig. She places her head upwards, and with her piercer saws a furrow in the wood. Then she forces her eggs a little below this opening. When two eggs have been thus placed she withdraws the piercer for a moment. Then she drops two more in the same way. So she continues until she has filled the nest.

It takes her about fifteen minutes to fill a single nest. She keeps on making and filling nests until she becomes too tired to fly. Shortly after this she dies.

In about six weeks the little cicadas hatch out from the eggs. The young insect has three pairs of legs. The first pair are very large. They look like lobster's claws, and have strong spines beneath. On the shoulders are pads instead of wings. Under the breast is a long beak for sucking.

As soon as they are hatched they run to the side of the twig. Then they loosen their hold. They are so light that they fall through the air

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like a feather. On reaching the ground they at once begin to dig. Now you can see the use of their large front feet.

They seem to follow the roots of plants. They attach themselves to those that are juiciest and most tender. With their long slender beak they drink the sap. This is their only food in some cases for seventeen years.

As the years roll on, the wing pads begin to swell. The long underground life is nearly over. Indeed, life itself is nearly over. It is to end in a brief glory of sunlight, wings, love, and music. A strange stir in the blood of the insects bids them mount upward. They cut their way through the soil by long passages. In the top of these they live for days. Sometimes in fine weather they ascend quite to the top for warmth and air. But they always descend again when it is cold or damp.

We have come now to the last stage in their remarkable history.

The time of this great change is usually at night. There is a good reason for this: They have many enemies. Different four-legged animals attack them. Birds devour them. Other insects, such as the dragon fly and the soldier

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bug, make them their prey. Even ants attack them with success, while hogs and poultry eat them greedily.

For several nights in succession they continue to come out of the earth. Fifteen hundred have been known to come from under a single apple tree.

After coming from the earth they mount a tree trunk usually. There they fasten themselves securely by their claws. After a short rest they begin to cast off their amber skins. This is difficult, for these are now hard and dry.

But at last the skin cracks. Through the lengthwise crack in the back the cicada pushes out its head and body. Next the legs and wings are drawn out from their cases.

At last the cicada is free. It leaves its empty skin, almost entire, still fastened to a tree.

Soon the rolling drums of the males are heard calling to their mates.

In another fortnight the mother begins to lay her eggs. And in six weeks more the whole generation has sunk into silence and death.

— *Adapted from* DR. HENRY MCCOOK'S "*Tenants of an Old Farm.*"

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TO A BEE

THOU wert out betimes, thou busy, bus
As abroad I took my early way,
Before the cow from her resting place
Had risen up, and left her trace
On the meadow, with dew so gray,
Saw I thee, thou busy, busy bee.

Thou wert working late, thou busy, bu
After the fall of the cistus flower,
When the primrose of evening was ready
I heard thee last as I saw thee first;
In the silence of the evening hour,
Heard I thee, thou busy, busy bee.

Thou art a miser, thou busy, busy bee!
Late and early at employ;
Still on thy golden stores intent,
Thy summer in heaping and hoarding i
That thy winters will never enjoy;
Wise lesson this for me, thou busy, bus

Little dost thou think, thou busy, busy
What is the end of thy toil

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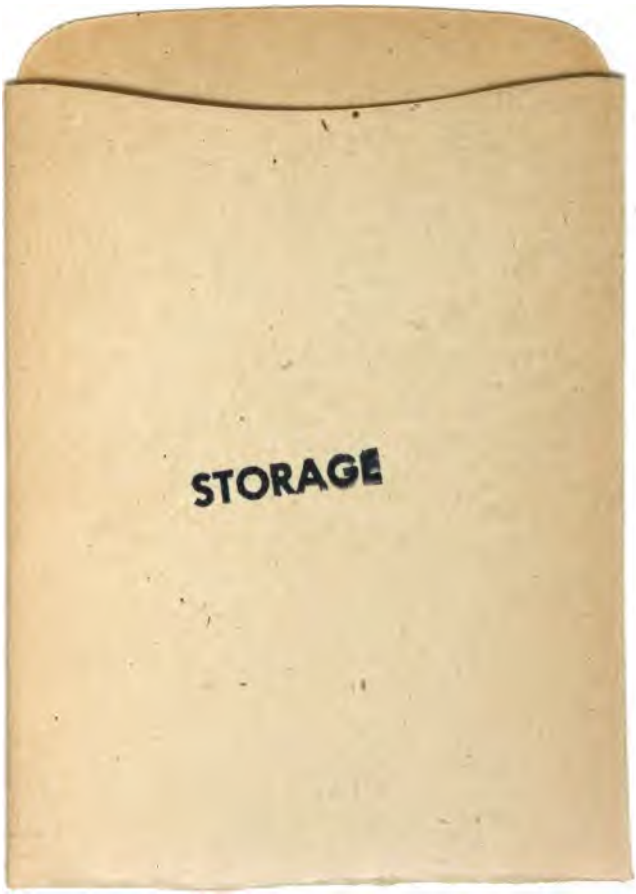

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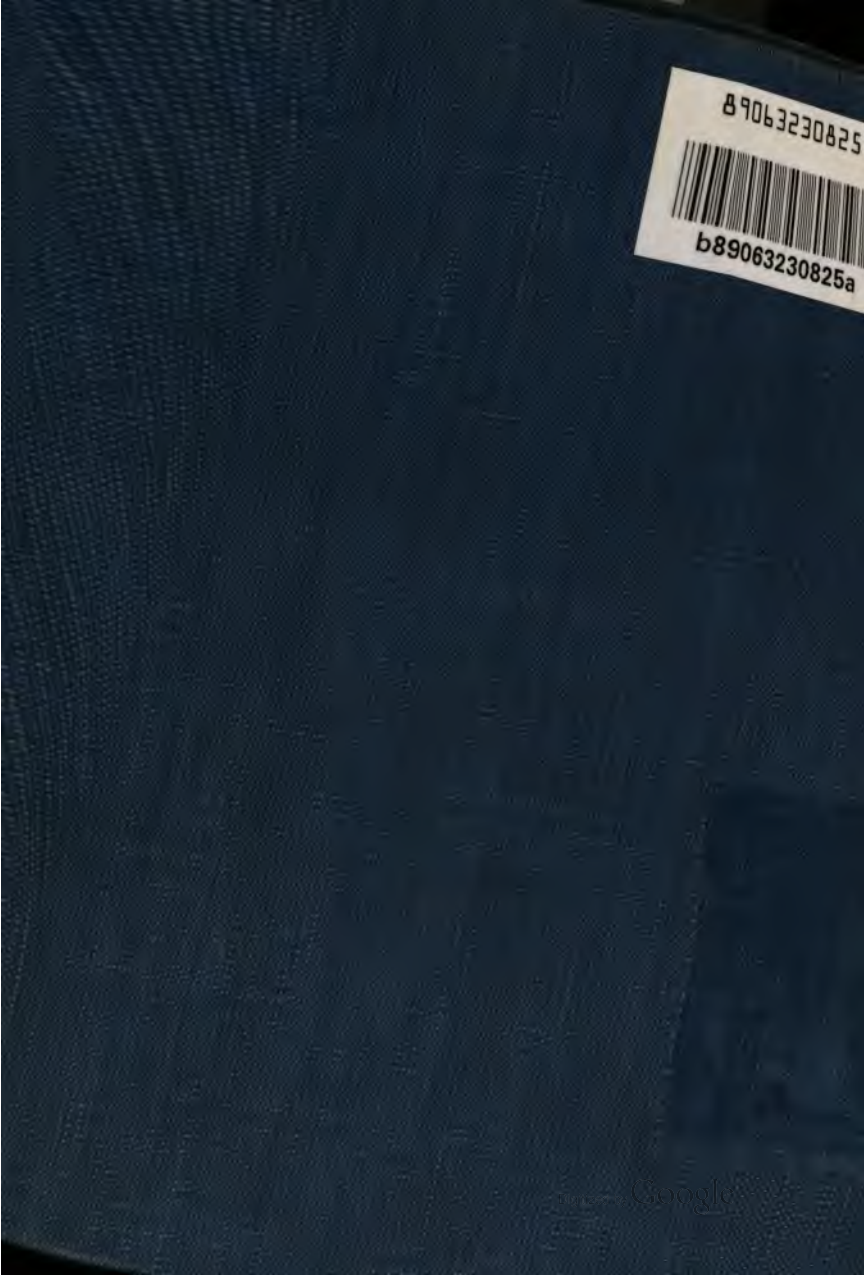
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